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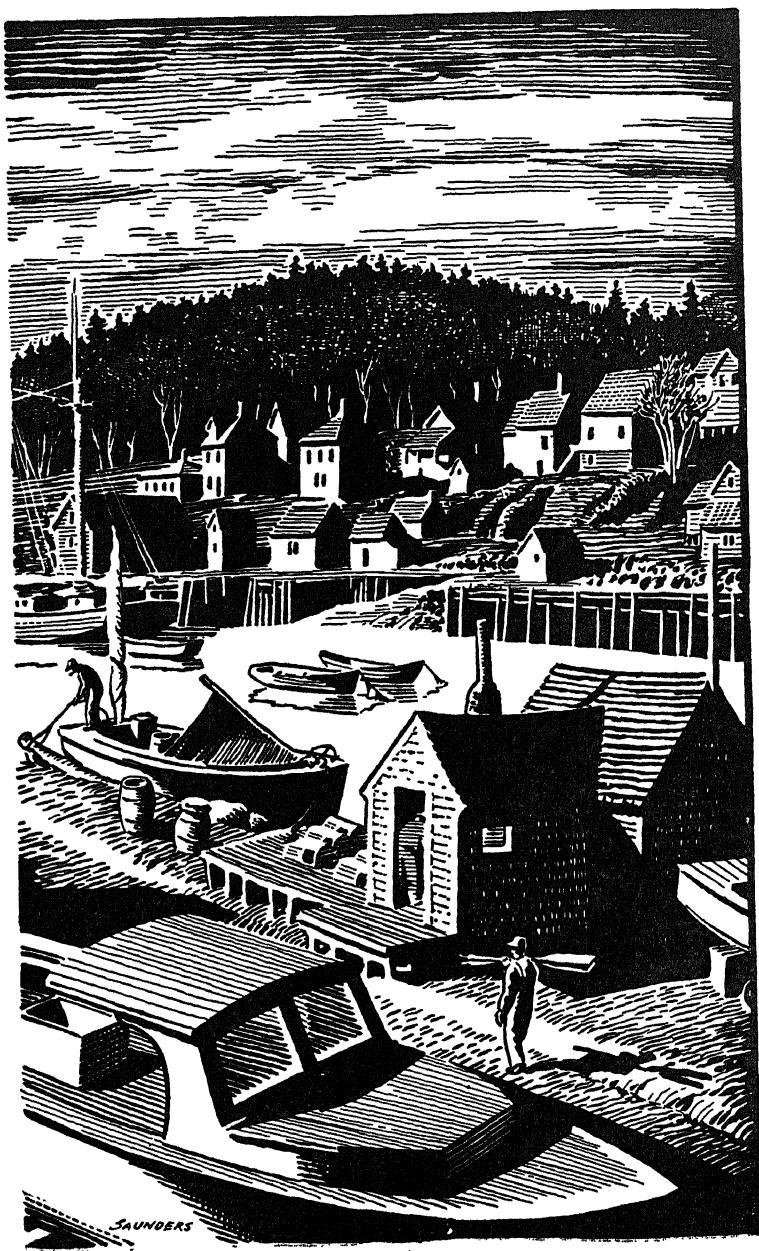




*Books by Hazel Young*

THE WORKING GIRL MUST EAT  
BETTER MEALS FOR LESS MONEY  
THE WORKING GIRL'S OWN COOK BOOK  
ISLANDS OF NEW ENGLAND

# Islands of New England



ISLANDS  
of  
New England

by  
HAZEL YOUNG



ILLUSTRATED BY F. WENDEROTH SAUNDERS

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*To*  
*Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine*  
*Who loves the islands*  
*of her native state—and its people*



.

## *If Once You Have Slept on an Island*

If once you have slept on an island  
You'll never be quite the same;  
You may look as you looked the day before  
And go by the same old name,

You may bustle about in street and shop;  
You may sit at home and sew,  
But you'll see blue water and wheeling gulls  
Wherever your feet may go.

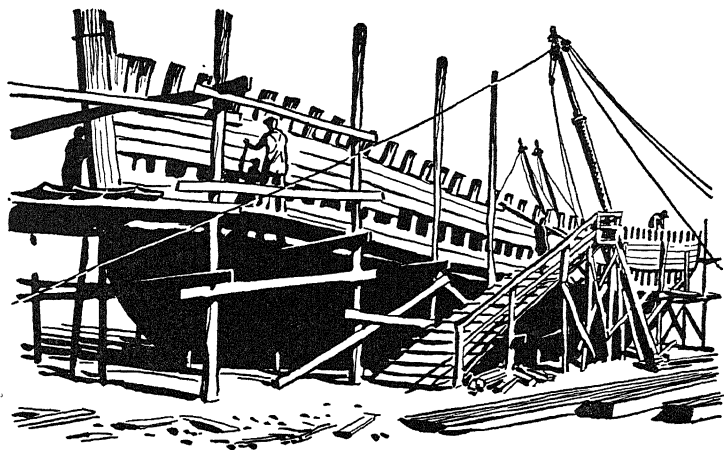
You may chat with the neighbors of this and that  
And close to your fire keep,  
But you'll hear ship whistle and lighthouse bell  
And tides beat through your sleep.

Oh, you won't know why, and you can't say how  
Such change upon you came,  
But—once you have slept on an island  
You'll never be quite the same!

—RACHEL FIELD

.





## Author's Note

ISLANDS have always held a peculiar charm for many people. To some, even the thought of an island and island living brings a sense of release, a "getting away from it all." To others, the love for an island rests on a more tangible foundation, a "something born in one" which neither time nor the years can ever quite wipe out.

For over two hundred years my roots have been grounded in a little island, Matinicus, lying far at the outer rim of Maine's beautiful Penobscot Bay, the same general section to which Edna St. Vincent Millay once referred so feelingly as *mon pays*—a phrase, Miss Millay explained, which has no exact equivalent in the English language, being only inadequately expressed by *my country*.

Little has been written about these more remote islands off the New England coast, particularly those off Maine.

## Author's Note

It seemed like a worth-while undertaking to collect between the covers of a book some of the more interesting information about these islands, with special emphasis on those off the Maine coast.

With little or no help from encyclopedias and reference books, the only way to learn about many of these islands was to visit them, to see what they looked like, and to ferret out any stories or unusual happenings that might have taken place over the years. This involved much time, and more than a little tact and patience—as islanders are, proverbially, not loquacious to people from away.

For over four years this research has occupied my time, and has proved to be one of the most interesting, tantalizing, and, at times, discouraging projects of my adult life. Much of the necessary traveling was done during the spring months before the summer people infringed too much on the regular routine of island living, or in the autumn, ahead of the winter storms which render travel too uncertain. However, one trip was made around Casco Bay on a sparkling January day when the islands were shrouded in a blanket of freshly fallen snow and the ever-greens stood stark and black like the outlines of an etching. Another memorable trip was made in a tiny Piper Cub, flying over the cold gray waters of Penobscot Bay and landing in a pasture on an offshore island. The day before Christmas it was, and what a dinner we had the next day at an island home!

The Maine Sea Coast Mission boat, the *Sunbeam*, was the cruise ship on several trips along the coast; and one memory that lingers is of a sunset glimpsed from the *Sunbeam* as we worked our way through the Fox Islands

## *Author's Note*

Thorofare with Rockland as our destination. The island mail boats with their varied cargoes—coal, wood, occasionally a cow or a crate of hens, or what-have-you—these were dependable ways of getting about, although a nasty spell of weather might delay them from their regular schedules.

On several occasions the boats of the Maine Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries took me among the islands, and much interesting information was gleaned from the wardens. I traveled on car ferries—one so small that you expected to drop off the edge; others large and commodious like those serving the Vineyard and Nantucket. Sometimes I went by plane. The first glimpse of the moors of Nantucket was from the air in a driving rainstorm. Small excursion boats, lobster boats, and even a dragger—I tried them all.

Sometimes I drove on the islands and explored them by car and on foot; and in a few instances, where the island was not too important, I viewed it from the road skirting the mainland shore.

To the person who loves a particular island, his own little spot of land is very dear; many folks, I fear, may resent necessary omissions. I regret this, but I couldn't cover them all.

After the introductory chapters, I have started with the Fundy Isles. Canadian, to be sure, but they really seem as if they should belong to the old U.S.A. Then I have followed the coast of Maine to the Isles of Shoals, Block Island in Rhode Island, and the major islands off the Massachusetts mainland. Interspersed are several chapters on general aspects of island life.

## *Author's Note*

Only the most cursory references have been given to the historical background of the various islands; for a more detailed study, the Maine State Library has excellent material. This book is not for the scholar but for the person who has an interest in and a love for these little-known outposts and who wants to know how to get there, and what to see and do when he arrives. Stories have been included that, it is hoped, will give something of the flavor and colorful character of the people.

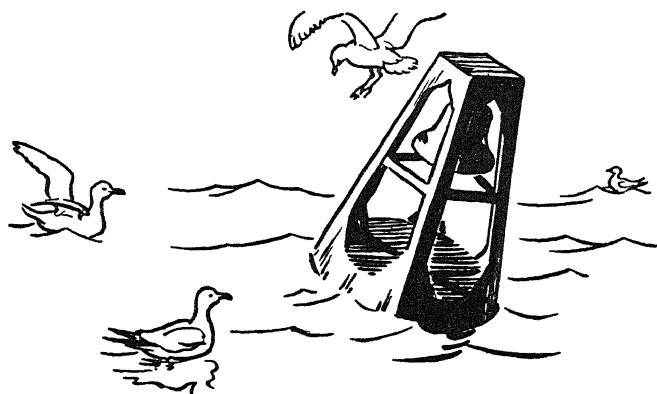
To those who have given of their time and advice I extend my sincere thanks, and wish to make specific acknowledgment to: the REVEREND NEAL D. BOUSFIELD of the Maine Sea Coast Mission; MRS. MARION YOUNG, Matinicus, Maine; MR. GEORGE RUSSELL, Seal Cove, Grand Manan, New Brunswick; and especially to the staff of the Maine State Library, Augusta, Maine.

I also want to make acknowledgment to the editors of the *Saturday Evening Post*, the *Ford Times*, *Travel Magazine*, and *Woman's Day*, in which articles of mine based on some of the material in this book have previously appeared.

H. Y.

*Newcastle, Maine*





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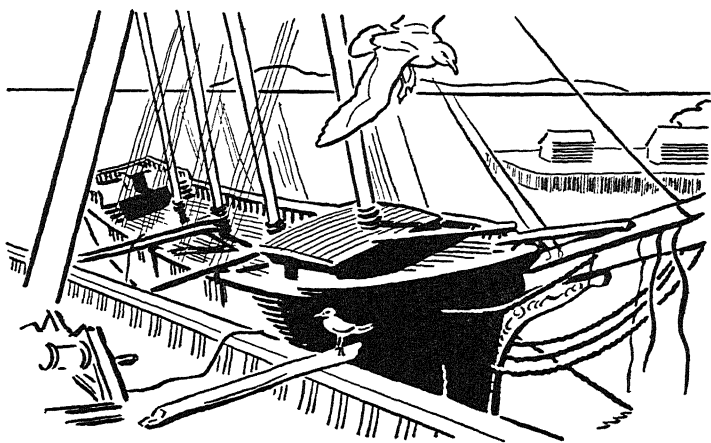
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# Islands of New England





## I

# Islands and Islanders

IF YOU LOOK at a map of Maine, you will see what a ragged chopped-up affair its coastline is—peninsulas, bays, and channels; and scattered all along the edge, islands, large and small—over two thousand of them. On these islands live several thousand people—a few in good-sized towns, but many in tiny communities with only a handful of families. Unlike Martha's Vineyard or Nantucket off the Massachusetts coast, or even Maine's inshore towns like Wiscasset and Searsport, there are no great mansions filled with priceless treasures from the Orient on these offshore islands. Few of the early settlers attained riches; mainly they were farmers in a small way, and fishermen making summer trips to the Banks and in the Bay of Fundy.

The early history and life on these offshore islands falls into much the same general pattern. Explorers—Norse-

## *Islands of New England*

men, English, French, Portuguese, Spanish—probably sailed into the little coves and inlets and landed on the rocky shores, but they left few traces by which they are remembered. At a very early period many of the islands were recognized as advantageous fishing stations; and on Matinicus the remains of stone houses were found which were believed to have been built by early French voyagers.

As the years went by and travel and trade were on the increase, permanent settlements were established in New England and more and more people began to make their homes on the offshore islands. These early settlers were a hardy lot—they had to be to survive. The menfolk were fishermen and oftentimes farmers, and the women, in addition to raising large families, made their own soap, spun wool and flax, and wove carpets, blankets, and wearing apparel, which were dyed in their own dye pots.

The last half of the preceding century probably marked the high point in the number of inhabitants on many of the islands. Life was hard, but it wasn't all work by any means. People made their own amusements: chopping bees with supper and dancing to follow; parties where "kissing games" were the entertainment and the refreshments might be a baked bean supper or a boiled dinner; community picnics and dances. In the 1840's a lodge called the "Washingtonian Temperance Society" flourished on many of the islands. It was "formed for the purpose of fighting the prevailing evil of intemperance." Evidently not every person joined, for in Charles A. E. Long's delightful little history, *Matinicus Isle; Its Story and Its People*, occurs this jingle:

## *Islands and Islanders*

Cold water is our constant drink,  
We used to have good wine,  
’Til Adams on Matinicus came  
And made the d—— fools sign.

The people on Matinicus  
Thought they couldn’t sign at all  
Until they got Squire Young’s consent;  
And likewise, Freeman Hall.

Further on in the chapter Mr. Long gives an alleged order for supplies to be used on a fishing trip for a party of two:

Please send by bearer the following articles, which if you prefer, you can charge to Mr. A or Mr. B—either is the safest: Four pounds of salt, and a small cask of whiskey; one pound of black pepper, and a dozen bottles of whiskey; four pounds of lard, and a large jug of whiskey; four hams, and six quart bottles of whiskey; three stout fishing lines and a quarter of a hundred weight of biscuit; the same weight of Cheshire cheese and two large pocket flasks of whiskey; one paper of large Limerick hooks, and a gallon of whiskey in any old vessel you don’t use; also one pound of white sugar, and a small jug of whiskey.

P.S. As we shall be gone several days, and as we may get wet, fishing, my doctor who has just stepped in, suggested that we had better take a little whiskey. Send it, and enter it on your books with other items above.

To an island man, then as now, the ocean has never been considered a barrier. Rather it is his highway, on which he travels wherever he wants to go—rarely using the compass, except perhaps in “thick o’ fog.” In the early days, before the era of marine engines, the man going inshore or to

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neighboring islands might have the wind die down and lie becalmed for hours, or even for days, so the galleys of the little boats always had plenty of food: fish and potatoes, a big mess of biscuits, and apple pies, doughnuts, or gingerbread. Still intact is a stained earthen pie plate in which my Grandmother Young carried an apple pie when Grandfather moved his wife and family of children to the mainland one hundred years ago.

People are still living who can remember when the first horse came to Matinicus, and the excitement of that day. One little boy is said to have exclaimed: "What a funny-looking cow—and it hasn't any horns!" The Matinicus assessors' schedule of a century ago listed fourteen oxen, sixty-three cows, thirty head of young stock and four hundred eighty-five sheep, but not a single horse. In 1953 the only farm stock on the island was a lone horse and a handful of sheep. The farms are "run out," with the woods always creeping closer and closer. Today hauling lobster traps is more lucrative than plowing and milking cows.

Moving pictures and the automobile have weaned many of the younger generation away from island life, and several formerly thriving communities are now almost deserted. Where once were prosperous farms are now alder bushes and white birches and the ever-encroaching juniper, and where substantial farmhouses stood are desolate cellar holes near which, in springtime, the lilac bushes are a mass of bloom. On some of the islands, substantial docks of Maine granite were built; today they are fallen into desolate ruin. People from away have taken over some islands, and for two months in summer the islands are busy places, but from Labor Day on through the lovely September and



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October days and through the winter months they are virtually deserted.

State-of-Maine people are inclined to be standoffish to strangers, and islanders are no exception—but when they get to know you, then they really take you in. On the more remote islands, where travel can at times be hazardous, there still aren't too many summer people and life runs on much as it did fifty years ago. In summer the more affluent may shuttle back and forth to the "main," where they have automobiles and take frequent trips with their families; in winter a week or more may elapse before there is a good "chance" to cross, and folks stay closer at home. But no matter how rugged the day, the men congregate in fish houses along the shore and tell yarns and occasionally knit trap heads and do a little work on their lobster gear. Island social life centers around eating, and card parties and dances are sufficient excuse for pies and cakes and brownies and great freezers of ice cream.

When it comes to island living, there are just two classes of people—there is seldom a middle ground. You either like an island very much or you just can't stand one. If you like night clubs and the theater and must have hard pavements under your feet—if you are slightly on the impatient side and can't bear to be held up by the weather—if you must have crowds of people and are bored with solitude—an island is not for you. But if you can take the weather and the tides and everything else just as they come along, with no whining<sup>s</sup> or fussing—if you are the kind of person who can pick your way along a woodsy

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path which ends on a high bluff overlooking the sea, and can sit for hours with the only sound the breaking of the surf on the rocks below, and the only living things the gulls circling overhead, and can come away refreshed and rejuvenated in spirit—then you can live on an island.

It is said by those who know that even the South Sea Islands are less romantic in fact than in fancy, and so it is with these nearer islands off our own New England shore. Before making the final decision to sell your entire holdings on the mainland and take up this new pattern of living, you should be sure that this is really what you want to do.

In buying a place on an island it is well to remember that, while a beautiful view is a feast to the eyes and the soul, it is also wise to take into consideration more mundane matters before signing on the dotted line. One thing to look into is the problem of landing. On even the well-populated islands, getting ashore is sometimes quite a job! At Matinicus, if we happen to strike the island at low water it means waiting around in the harbor on a lobster car, surrounded by baggage and cartons, until someone will "boat us" in to the dock. On many picturesque smaller islands that look, as you sail by, like a perfect spot for a house, and may be for sale "dirt cheap," landing is possible only half a dozen times during the summer months.

Another thing to consider is the water supply. You are surrounded by *water*, but there might not be a decent drop to drink. Most island wells, unless put in very recently, are "dug" wells, which often go dry in the middle of Au-

## *Islands and Islanders*

gust or thereabouts. If you want to spend the money to have a well drilled, then remember that it may mean hiring a scow and transporting the drilling rig and the crew from the mainland; then boarding the men while the work goes on. And you might run into a ledge and have to blast, or the water might come in salty.

Buying an old house and fixing it up is a favorite pastime for some summer people. Sometimes they wish they hadn't. Unless the location is rather urban, everything—lumber, hardware, shingles, bricks for the chimney—yes, everything but sand for the mortar must be transported across the water. If you run short of supplies, there may be no telephone to the mainland; sometimes, if there is, the cable will be out of order and no service for a month or so.

To give anyone concrete advice about buying an island or building on an island is an impossibility. It all depends on the person—and on the island. I can only say, "Don't be too hasty." First, be sure that island living is for you; secondly, try it out for a few weeks or preferably for a season before you buy. Then when you have really made up your mind and are an islander at heart, you will end up by thinking that an island is the only place to live.



I I

## The Fundy Isles

WE ARE good Canadians," the Grand Manan native said, "but we really ought to belong to Maine." Not all the islanders feel this way, of course, but if you look at a map of the North Atlantic coast, you will see that one of the largest islands off the coast of Maine is Canadian territory. The story is that the British put over a fast one when the Webster-Ashburton Treaty establishing the international boundary line between Canada and the States was signed in 1842. After a lavish luncheon, with plenty to drink, the American members of the commission, headed by Daniel Webster, then Secretary of State, were so befogged that they agreed to a boundary line several miles nearer shore than the line previously planned for, though

## *The Fundy Isles*

actually the United States received about seven twelfths of the land in dispute. As a consequence both Grand Manan and Campobello are now Canadian territory, although geographically they are closer to Maine. The distance from Grand Manan to West Quoddy Head, the eastern "jumping-off place" in Maine, is only about six miles—while the nearest point on the Canadian mainland is over twice as far.

If you happen to have your own boat, you can sail across the Bay of Fundy, with its fog and incredibly high tides, and land at the village of North Head on Grand Manan. That's the way for the yachtsman. If you are a person who likes to fly, you can take a plane at Eastport, Maine, and land at Grand Manan in a matter of minutes; from St. John the trip takes only a little longer. Otherwise, you take the steamer *Grand Manan III* from St. Andrews or St. John, getting your boat schedule well in advance, though, to make sure of the day and the hour of sailing. If this is your first trip to the Maritime Provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island), an overnight stop at St. John in New Brunswick, one of the oldest cities in Canada, makes an interesting prelude to the trip. You rumble over the cobblestones by the waterfront to leave your car at the dock for loading on the night before sailing. Then you take a taxi to the Admiral Beatty Hotel, facing a park high above the city. Around this square radiate the principal shopping streets of the city. And how American women's eyes sparkle when they see the gorgeous displays of English china and woollens, at prices usually under those for similar goods in the States!

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The *Grand Manan III*, formerly a private yacht, has comfortable quarters for passengers but is sadly lacking in space for cars. Only five can be carried, with possibly a tight squeeze for a tiny British car. If you travel to the island during the summer season, you need to make your car reservation long beforehand.

Sometimes the boat goes directly across the bay with no intermediate stop—a distance of just under fifty miles in about three hours' time, depending on wind and tide. On other trips it will be nearer seven hours before you reach the dock at North Head. You'll have plenty of time for a nap in the lounge, a walk on deck, and a good hearty meal in the dining saloon before the boat docks at Campobello, where it stays for an hour or so while freight is unloaded.

Many people think of Campobello as the place where Franklin D. Roosevelt was stricken with polio. It was in August 1921 that the thirty-nine-year-old Roosevelt had been sailing with his wife and family, getting back in time to help fight a forest fire near the shore of the island. Wishing to cool off, he took a dip in a small lake and, after getting home, took another plunge in the icy waters of the Bay of Fundy. Starting with a severe chill, the disease advanced rapidly and in only a short time the paralysis became evident.

Campobello, in the early days, was known as "Passamaquoddy Outer Island" and until 1857 was virtually a feudal state under the Owen family. In 1881 the island was sold to an American syndicate and several summer homes were built. Among the first cottages was one built in 1884 by James Roosevelt, Esq., of New York, when

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his son Franklin Delano was a baby. Here the boy spent some of his happiest days.

Campobello was a paradise for smuggling. Some of the most remarkable voyages are recorded! American vessels had a Swedish registration and went from Sweden to Eastport in three or four hours. Evidently lax public officials existed back in those days.

Today Campobello is a combination of picturesque fishing villages and summer homes, linked together by thirty miles of good road. A free car ferry from Lubec, Maine, subsidized by the Canadian government, takes the visitor to the island in five minutes or so.

From Campobello you head directly for Northern Head, whose great cliffs and walls of rock make the steamer seem like a toy as it skirts the easterly coast of the island. Off in the distance toward the Canadian mainland loom up The Wolves, a group of bare ledges rising out of the sea.

Beyond Northern Head you pass Ashburton Point, where many years ago on a bitter winter night occurred one of the most spectacular disasters in the history of the island, when the ship *Lord Ashburton* was wrecked with the loss of twenty or more men. Grand Manan people still tell the tale of the young Norwegian sailor who climbed, inch by inch, up the sheer wall of rock coated with ice and finally reached safety, but not until his feet were so badly frozen that they had to be amputated. This man grew old on the island and for years was the village cobbler at North Head.

Most offshore islands along the Maine coast have nat-

## *Islands of New England*

ural curiosities which are always conversation pieces to visitors. Just beyond Ashburton Point are strange rock formations, called imaginatively the Seven Days' Work. Here are seven distinct layers of rock, one above the other. The story runs that six of these, the more regular of the pile, were the work of the Lord, while the Devil was responsible for the irregular top layer.

It was about three hundred and fifty years ago, in 1604, that Champlain first saw Grand Manan and anchored off the eastern end in a partly exposed harbor, known today as Whale Cove. A great rocky headland guards the approach to the harbor at North Head. On this headland is Swallow Tail Lighthouse, one of the most photogenic lighthouses along the entire coast. As the steamer skirts the coast on the last leg of the trip and rounds the point, you're struck by the picture-book quality of the view.

All the freight of the island and the travelers—"folks from away" or natives back from a day or two of shopping at St. John—land at the dock at North Head. Like a huge bumblebee your car is raised by crane from the hold and swung through the air. You hold your breath until it lands safe and sound, ready to take off down the island.

The year-around population of Grand Manan—which is a parish of Charlotte County, New Brunswick—stays fairly stationary at about 3000. Grand Mananites are mainly—like most Maritime natives—of British stock, a mixture of English, Scotch and Irish. Some are descendants of Loyalists who came to the island as a place of



## *The Fundy Isles*

refuge at the time of the Revolution. Even today they speak of Loyalists as "skeedaddlers."

Grand Manan is like a sulky child who turns his back on the rest of the family. On the State-of-Maine side, the island rises straight out of the ocean in a series of great cliffs from two to four hundred feet in height. For sixteen miles these piles of rock extend along the landward side of the island with scarcely a break the entire length. This is the uninhabited side of Grand Manan.

On the Bay of Fundy side the land is low, with small sandy beaches here and there. It is on this eastern side that the islanders live, mainly in five small villages—North Head, Castalia, Woodward's Cove, Grand Harbour, and Seal Cove.

The principal village is North Head, which centers about the steamboat wharf and extends a mile or so along THE road—a splendid hard road which stretches fourteen miles straight down the island. A dirt road leads off this main highway to the right, running five miles across the island to Dark Harbor. From the high cliff where the road ends you look down on a pool of water far below and a stretch of pebbly beach, the site of one of the island's principal industries. Grand Manan—and more particularly Dark Harbor—is one of the few places in the world where the gathering of dulse is done commercially. At dead low water you can see young men and boys scrambling over the slippery rocks, scooping into baskets the brown slimy seaweed, then bringing it inshore and spreading it out to dry. The dried dulse is packed in great tea chests and shipped all over the States, even as far as the Pacific Coast. Some dulse is used as the source of certain mineral salts,

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but at least 50 per cent goes for chewing. Offer a bag of dulse and a box of candy to most Maritime provincials and they'll take the dulse every time.

Some of the finest lobsters in the world come from the icy waters of the Bay of Fundy, and in certain months of the year many Grand Manan menfolks have strings of lobster traps scattered along the shores.

The lobster season opens on "Trap Day" in November. For days the wharves along the eastern shore have been piled high with lobster traps, and everywhere men are scurrying around getting ready for the great day. All Trap Day morning, dozens of boats, large and small, have been bobbing around in the little harbors, waiting for the signal to be off. At just noon, setting low in the water with their heavy loads, they all pull out to the grounds.

The largest industry on the island is the smoking of herring, with sardine canning running a close second. Three sardine canneries operate intermittently, providing a market for the seining boats that come into port loaded with herring, and furnish employment to quite a slice of the islanders.

Grand Manan has always been familiar with international problems. As early as 1784 the Loyalists received a license from the government of Nova Scotia to occupy Grand Manan. At various times in its history smuggling wasn't too uncommon, and more than one load of contraband has been hidden along the rocky shores of the island.

Back in 1909, the vessel *Hestia*, bound from Glasgow to St. John with a cargo of sugar, was wrecked off Old

## *The Fundy Isles*

Proprietor Ledge and, as the water worked its way through the barrels of sugar, it was found that in the center of each barrel was a ten-gallon keg of Scotch whisky. According to George Russell, the local historian, the islanders worked hard to salvage that cargo.

At the southwestern end of the island is Southern Cross, a great stone cross which looks like the pictures of a generation ago of the Rock of Ages. You can reach this great natural monument by driving your car to the end of the road, then walking along a path at the top of the cliff, from which point you look down on Southern Cross.

Really to see the strange rock formations of Grand Manan, you should take the fifty-mile boat trip around the island. On this trip you may also touch at some of the smaller islands, well-nigh surrounded by weirs, and you will see Kent Island, where thousands of eider ducks nest, and where a bird sanctuary is maintained by Bowdoin College. In this same desolate stretch of water looms up Gannet Rock, the lonely lighthouse, named, it is said, because a hungry keeper kept himself alive by eating the tough flesh of the gannets when his supplies were delayed in arrival.

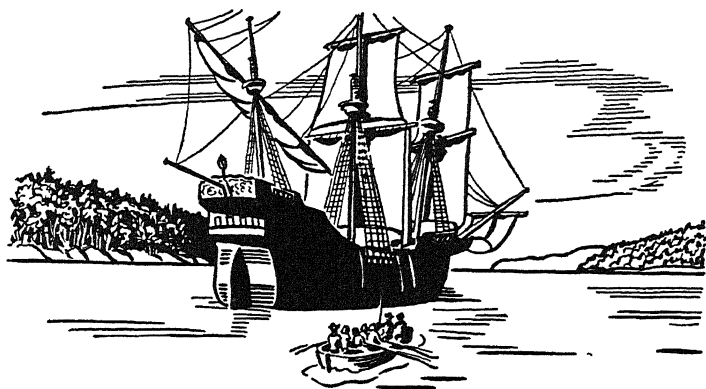
It is its atmosphere as a little world complete in itself, as well as its scenery and cool summer days and nights, which has attracted interesting and unusual people to Grand Manan. Audubon was one of the early men of distinction who visited the island. Willa Cather spent many summers and did much of her writing in a little house high above the beach and overlooking Whale Cove.

## *Islands of New England*

Artists come to the island nearly every season and capture on canvas the rugged charm of the place.

To the tourist looking for night life and the diversions of swanky hotels, Grand Manan has little to offer. During the summer months several small inns and boarding-houses take care of the influx of tourists, and in the off season—preferred by many visitors—there are boarding-houses furnishing food and comfortable lodging.

Lying about a mile off the coast of Maine, and north of Campobello, Deer Island is easily reached by car ferry from L'Etete—ten miles from St. George on the New Brunswick mainland—and is also tied to Eastport, Maine, by a ferry which, during the summer months, makes frequent trips. Accessible as it is, Deer Island is yet an unspoiled place, with picturesque little fishing villages clustered along its shores. On the island are several sardine canneries and a huge lobster pound, said to be the largest in the world.



I I I

## Islands Down East

**M**OTORISTS traveling on Route 1 toward Calais, Maine, and passing through the village of Red Beach would little suspect that the tiny island which they see as they drive along the banks of the St. Croix River is one of the most important sites in the early history of North America. St. Croix covers only seven acres and lies in the center of the river about one half-mile from the shore at Red Beach and an equal distance from the green slopes of Charlotte County, New Brunswick.

The St. Croix River flows into Passamaquoddy Bay, then into the Bay of Fundy and the Atlantic Ocean. Above St. Croix Island is Oak Bay, with the rivers Waweigh and St. Croix coming in on either side and, with the St. Croix continuing below, forming a cross. From this comes the name St. Croix.

On a lovely summer day as you stop near the banks of

## *Islands of New England*

the river and look down over the island you could hardly imagine a more peaceful scene—with the lighthouse tower rising above the green of the trees and the river flowing placidly by. But on this little spot of land occurred some of the most harrowing experiences that any human could endure.

It was in March 1604 that the expedition of Pierre du Guast, Sieur de Monts, a wealthy French nobleman, sailed from Le Havre-de-Grace \* to engage in the fur trade and to found a permanent colony in America. The party, numbering only about one hundred men, included mechanics, blacksmiths, farmers, soldiers and sailors, Huguenot minister and Catholic priest, and a well-known navigator and geographer, Samuel de Champlain, who was to found, some four years later, the first permanent French settlement in America, at Quebec. On June 26, de Monts and his men landed on the tiny island of St. Croix, planted there the French flag and set up the Catholic cross, then started building their New Acadia.

Champlain in his *Bref Discours* wrote:

Having found no place more suitable than this island, we began to erect a barricade on a small islet a little removed from it, and this served as a platform for mounting our cannon. Each worked so efficiently that in a very short time it was put in a state of defence, though the mosquitoes (which are little flies) gave us great annoyance while at work, and several of our men had their faces so swollen by their bites that they could scarcely see.

From June until early fall building went on, including several dwellings and a storehouse, "which was fifty-four

\* Now Le Havre.

## *Islands Down East*

feet long, eighteen broad, and twelve feet high—an oven was also built, and a handmill for grinding our wheat, which gave much trouble and labor to most of us, since it was a painful task.”

Late in August, two ships of de Monts’s sailed for France, and two days later Champlain, with twelve seamen and two Indian guides, set out to explore “the coast of Norumbega,” which lay to the westward. For a month this exploring party sailed along the Maine coast and among its islands, arriving back at St. Croix Island early in October. When the Christmas season rolled around, the men, little realizing the hardships and tragedies that lay before them, gathered in the great dining hall before a blazing log fire, told stories of their homeland, played practical jokes on one another and feasted on a prodigious dinner of roast venison and other game along with the few remaining supplies they had brought with them from France. This, it is thought, was the first Christmas to be celebrated in America.

Sometime during the early part of this winter, a “newspaper” was published, written by hand and telling the gossip and daily events of the settlement. This was circulated among the men and helped to while away the long hours. Copies of this “first newspaper to be published in America” are said to be in existence in France today.

The winter of 1604-1605 proved to be a rugged one, a winter of biting cold, with great drifts of snow blanketing the land from the fall until the last of April. Of the seventy-nine men who had watched the parent ships sail down the river in the late summer, only about half that number remained at the winter’s close.

## *Islands of New England*

Many of the men were afflicted with a "certain malady—called land-sickness, otherwise scurvy," which Champlain described in horrible detail. During this terrible winter all beverages froze except the Spanish wine, and cider was dispensed by the pound.

Owing to the ebb and flow of the tides, which allowed huge cakes of ice to float in the river, the men were unable to go to the mainland for drinking water and were forced to drink melted snow. When spring finally came and vessels arrived from France, the Sieur de Monts decided to go in search of a more suitable site for settlement, and in 1605 transferred across the Bay of Fundy to Port Royal (now Annapolis Royal), Nova Scotia. During this time and the next three years Champlain explored the New England coast to Martha's Vineyard, discovering Mount Desert Island and most of the large rivers of Maine, and for the first time charting the coast in detail. In 1608 Champlain brought his colonists to Quebec.

During the next few years, St. Croix Island was occasionally visited by exploring parties, none of which remained. In 1606 Champlain and Poutrincourt revisited the island and "found some wheat which had fallen to the ground and had come up as fine as one could desire, and a quantity of garden vegetables which had grown up fair and large. It gave us the greatest pleasure to see that the soil there was good and fertile." In 1610 Poutrincourt called at the island and had Mass said for the men who died in the tragic winter of 1604. Finally, in 1613, Sir Samuel Argall, an Englishman, landed on the island, and after confiscating a good pile of salt, ordered fires set—



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whereupon all the buildings went up in smoke, thus destroying any claims of France to this island.

For nearly two hundred years tiny St. Croix Island was forgotten, except for bands of Indians paddling up the river to the falls for alewives, or white men cruising along the shore for hunting or fishing. The swift-running tides have gnawed away at the banks until the island has been reduced to nearly half of its original length. If de Monts's quarrelsome Huguenot pastor and argumentative Roman priest could meet again for one of their bitter quarrels, the sailors gathered around shouting, "Hang the Huguenot" and "Down with the Papist" would find it even more difficult to keep the clerics separated. But today all is peaceful, and legend has it that somewhere on the little island the two enemies lie buried in a common grave.

St. Croix Island has had, in its day, several names—De Monts Bone, Neutral, and Dochet among others. One explanation of the name "Dochet" is that once upon a time there was a maiden named Theodosia who used often to row over to the island from the mainland. To the local people it was only natural to call it "Dosia's Island," and the French easily transformed that into Dochet. But it is as St. Croix that the island again played an important part in early American history.

However unsuccessful de Monts's colony on St. Croix was, this settlement established for all time the eastern boundary of the United States and Canada. For years before the Revolution, the St. Croix River was mentioned in many treaties as the boundary between New England

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and Acadia, but unfortunately no one had been able to agree as to the exact location of this river.

The years went on, and more and more settlers were making their homes in the region. Would they be British subjects or Americans? One large faction insisted that the boundary would be along the Penobscot—and many Loyalists took refuge at Penobscot (now Castine), believing that the close of the war would find this whole region under British rule and that the Penobscot River would be the boundary between Nova Scotia and what was then Massachusetts.

At length, in 1782, a preliminary treaty was drawn up; and in September 1783, the final treaty was signed, providing that the St. Croix River should be the true boundary. But where was the St. Croix River? For years the arguments went on; and it was not until 1796 that the appointment of three commissioners was concluded: "one to be made by the King of Great Britain, one by the President of the United States, and one by the two thus elected." Old maps and documents were studied—rivers and islands were visited—Indians of the Passamaquoddy and Machias tribes were questioned—and many surveys were made. Finally, in 1797, tracings of Champlain's maps were sent from England, showing the St. Croix River and the island on which the French colony had wintered so disastrously in 1604. Again the little island was visited and, after much investigation and digging, piles of bricks were found at regular distances from each other, also stones laid up in clay and several tiers deep, exactly as described in Champlain's plan of the buildings in de Monts's colony. It was not until October 1798, however, that a declaration

## *Islands Down East*

was finally made establishing the present St. Croix River as the true boundary line between Canada and the United States.

Near the St. Croix lighthouse is a granite boulder, and on its face a large bronze tablet, on which is the following inscription:

1604-1904. TO COMMEMORATE THE DISCOVERY AND OCCUPATION OF THIS ISLAND BY DE MONTS AND CHAMPLAIN WHO NAMED IT L'ISLE SAINT CROIX. FOUNDED HERE 26, JUNE 1604, THE FRENCH COLONY OF ACADIA, THEN THE ONLY SETTLEMENT OF EUROPEANS NORTH OF FLORIDA. THIS TABLET IS ERECTED BY THE RESIDENTS OF THE SAINT CROIX VALLEY. 1904.

In 1949 Congress authorized establishment of the island as a national monument, and in 1950 the Department of the Interior announced plans for a national park, to include not only the island but also property on the mainland as well.

Just off Lubec, and about the same distance from Eastport, is Treat Island, also called Allan's or Dudley's Island. Had the "Quoddy Project" gone through, Treat Island might have been in the limelight again, as the dam was to have run directly across the island.

It is with Colonel John Allan of Revolutionary War fame that this little island, less than a mile long, is most closely associated. John Allan was a Scot whose family were early settlers of Halifax. At the outbreak of the war young Allan, having been a frequent visitor in Massachusetts, voiced his sympathies with the American colonists and was forced to leave Nova Scotia. After several in-

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interviews with General George Washington, Allan was appointed Superintendent of the Eastern Indians and rendered valuable service in maintaining friendly relations between the Indians and the colonists.

At the close of the war he was granted Dudley's Island, as it was then called, and for years conducted a general store, exchanging goods for fish, furs, and porpoise oil.

Near the center of the island is a large monument, with the following inscription:

OUR ANCESTORS, COL. JOHN ALLAN, BORN JAN. 14, 1746. DIED FEB. 7TH, 1805. MARY PATTEN, HIS WIFE. BORN FEB. 14, 1746. DIED JUNE 6, 1819. THIS FENCE AND MONUMENT WERE ERECTED BY THE DESCENDANTS OF COL. ALLAN AND MARY P. ALLAN TO THE 4TH GENERATION, 1859.

On the top of the hill, close to Allan's monument, once stood a cannon, made in Spain probably at the time of the Spanish Armada and placed on the island by the British about 1812. The big gun has had an uneasy time, as vandals have tried to carry away the old relic, but have only succeeded in rolling it from one spot to another.

Near Lubec is Popes Folly, an island where long ago a man named Pope built a house, dug a well, and tried unsuccessfully to have a garden and live. He fished for a while, then gave up in disgust and left the island. Situated, as Popes Folly is, on the international boundary, it has had an exciting history in the field of smuggling and bootlegging.

You can drive on to Moose Island, following along the

## *Islands Down East*

shore of Passamaquoddy Bay, with views of the islands and the New Brunswick hills beyond. After the bridge to the island is crossed, you pass the now dismantled Quoddy village, built to house Army engineers who began work on the Passamaquoddy Bay Power Project in 1935 and continued through 1936, suspending operations when Congress failed to appropriate funds to continue the work.

The "Quoddy Project" was in essence a plan to harness the tremendous tides of the Passamaquoddy Bay region of New England and the Canadian province of New Brunswick for the production of cheap, ample electric power. The tides offer a never-failing source of power—for twice a day, every day of the year, they ebb and flow, with a total range averaging nineteen feet in this region. Quoddy provides two large natural reservoirs—Passamaquoddy Bay and Cobscook Bay—for a receiving and discharging pool. A series of dams and locks would keep one of these basins, Passamaquoddy Bay, at or near high-tide level, by means of sea gates opening inward as the tide neared full height and closing when it started to recede. The other basin, Cobscook Bay, would be kept at or near the low-tide mark by sea gates opening outward on the ebbing tide, and closing as the tide turned. The difference in water level (nineteen feet) between the two basins would cause power to be generated by turbines in another dam between these two basins. The enormous flow of water would be constant and unfailing. At the present time no one knows whether this project will ever be carried out.

Going on from Quoddy, you soon come to the twisting narrow streets of Eastport, a fishing town where sardines have been canned for seventy-five years or so. Here, in

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the customhouse on the waterfront, is the easternmost United States Weather Bureau station, from which come the familiar words: "Storm warnings from Eastport to Block Island . . ."

Moose Island has had at times a tumultuous history. In 1807 came the Embargo Act, which caused Eastport for several years to be a real boom town, with fortunes being made by two-way smuggling. Thirty thousand barrels of flour reached the docks at Eastport in a single week, and almost overnight were taken to the British shores. But the most exciting time of all was during the four years of British occupation during the War of 1812. Sir Thomas Hardy, who was with Nelson at Trafalgar, gave many parties on his flagship *Ramulies*, and Moose Island's first theater was established in the island schoolhouse. Boxes were built and an orchestra where the regimental band played, and on the entrance of the military governor the audience rose and the band struck up "God Save the King" followed by "Yankee Doodle."

On June 30, 1818, the British and American troops exchanged salutes, the British flag was lowered and the American colors raised, while the band played "Yankee Doodle."



#### I V

## Beal's Island

THERE IS something really exciting about Beal's Island. Not that it is anything special for beauty. It isn't! But after visiting and hearing of so many islands along the coast that have literally faded away— islands where a generation or so ago there were fifty or one hundred families, and today there are only one or two or perhaps none at all—why, then, to visit Beal's and see the civic spirit and the active community life is downright stimulating.

Lying less than a mile offshore across the waters of Moosabec Reach, Beal's Island may be reached by ferry from Jonesport in only a matter of minutes. Jonesport—the home of "Seth Parker," Phillips Lord's famous radio character—is a long straggling fishing town on the north shore of the Moosabec Reach. As of late 1951, Beal's now has a car ferry. Edith Drury of the Sea Coast Mission staff, in her column "God's Tugboat," a regular feature

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of the *Maine Coast Fisherman*, described vividly the occasion of the ferry's first trip and the co-operative spirit of the islanders. She wrote:

Beal's new car ferry was a dramatic event, as the ferry had been under construction for months and people had been eagerly awaiting its first run. Crowds lined the Jonesport shore as the ferry approached, nudged along by Haliburten Smith's boat on one side and Marshall Kelley's on the other. Besides a considerable crew of men, boys, dogs, women and children, the ferry brought Elmer Beal and his jeep, which fastened onto the trailer (the Mobile Dental Unit trailer from the State Bureau of Health) and towed it aboard the ferry in jig time. Another car and our Mission station wagon were driven aboard too, and off we started across the Reach. When we arrived at Beal's, practically the whole town was at the shore to meet us. As only one ramp on the ferry was completed, we backed the station wagon ashore, and people were clapping and cameras were clicking all around. The trailer was then turned around by man-power, Elmer turned his jeep around and slipped in ahead of the trailer, and off they came as slick as a button. Our dental office on wheels was then parked beside the schoolhouse, and there it has been ever since.

If you look at detailed charts, you will see that Beal's Island is small, with much less area than Great Wass Island—from which it is separated by a narrow strait, the Flying Place, across which lies a causeway. Great Wass has no inhabitants now south of the Flying Place except the Coast Guard station on the west shore and a few fishermen's camps at Sand Cove on the east side. But Beal's is quite a settlement, with seven or eight hundred people, five stores, three churches, and excellent schools.

A big percentage of Beal's living comes from the sea.



## *Beal's Island*

A few men go seining, a few more work in the boat yards, but most of the male population are lobster fishermen. Right after sunup you can hear the chug of their motors as they start off to haul their traps—around lonely Crumple Island, perhaps, with its abandoned Coast Guard station, or even around Steele Harbor Island, looking like the coast of Labrador.

Beals and Alleys are thicker than blueberries on Beal's Island, all descendants of the first settlers—of Manwarren Beal, who came to the island from Old York, Maine, and of John Alley, who settled on Great Wass Island. Manwarren Beal was a huge man but his son Barney was even larger. Standing six feet seven inches in his stocking feet, "Tall" Barney was a well-known character all along the coast. Even today stories are still told about him and his great feats of strength.

"When Tall Barney sat down in a chair," they say, "he could rest his hands on the floor." One of the stock stories on the island dates back to the days when British boats were harassing fishermen off the Maine coast. One summer day, when Tall Barney was pulling his net, three men from an English vessel boarded his boat and announced that he was under arrest for fishing too close to English waters. This was too much for Barney, who gave out an awful yell, hauled the net out of the sea, and plunked it down over the heads and shoulders of the unfortunate Britishers. What Barney told them wouldn't stand repeating, and from that time on Beal's Islanders were bothered no more by marauding English vessels.

Today the "pride and joy" of Beal's Island is the high school basketball team. With a small school enrollment

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and only a few boys to choose from in making up the team, Beal's High School trounces its neighboring opponents with scores like 132-33 (Cherryfield) and 102-19 (Washington Academy), finally winning the state small school title. The night of the play-off, the island was practically deserted, only a few old people and infants being left at home, while busloads of able-bodied men, women, and children went along to the game to support the team. The school hasn't anything elaborate in the way of equipment; the spectators' balcony is about the size of a band-box—but how they do cheer when a boy makes a basket! The amazing accuracy of the boys' shots is what overwhelms the opponents. One reasonable explanation is that every male child on the island has a basketball hoop, and outdoors from early spring until snow flies he is practicing his shots.

One of the most incredible migrations in the history of New England took place in August 1866 when a band of State-of-Mainers set sail in the barkentine *Nellie Chapin*, bound for the Holy Land. The hold of the vessel was loaded with lumber and building material, plows and harrows and seeds and even some of Maine's famous seed potatoes.

The year before, a disgruntled Mormon elder—a former English actor by the name of George Washington Adams—had journeyed along the coast and talked and preached so persuasively in Jonesport, Beal's Island, Addison, and other neighboring towns, that ordinarily levelheaded farmers, fishermen, carpenters, and others fell under his spell and seemed to lose their usual common sense and good

## *Beal's Island*

judgment. One after another they sold their possessions and, headed by the highly respected S. L. Wass, Bishop of the church in Addison and Jonesport, and by Captain Norton of Addison, one hundred and fifty-six of these hardheaded State-of-Mainers left their homes, their trades, and their farms to follow this magnetic promoter.

Adams called the movement the Palestine Emigration Association and dubbed himself the founder of the Church of the Messiah, whose mission was to colonize the Holy Land. These hard-working citizens, many of whom had never before been a hundred miles away from home, were the chosen people to make good the Biblical prophecy concerning the rehabilitation of Jerusalem.

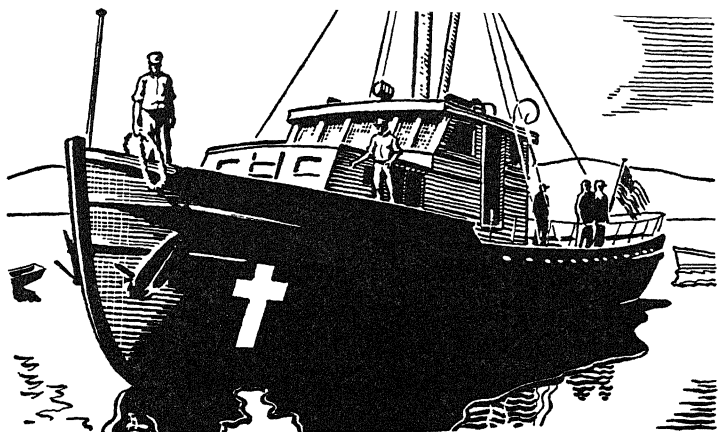
Arrangements had been made beforehand with the Turkish government for the colonists to land their cargo and to set about establishing their new homes. With no knowledge of the natives of this strange land, with inadequate funds and lack of sanitation, these poor misguided souls battled against disease, heat, and ignorance. At the end of the first year only seventy-six of the original number were left in Palestine, the remainder having either died or returned to America.

Struggling on for a few months more, the colonists who still remained finally became so discouraged that they appealed to the American consul for aid. But no response was made to their pleas. It so happened that a reporter from the *New York Sun* was in the Holy Land and hearing of their plight, he advanced sufficient funds to get the pathetic remnants back to New York. Here they arrived, with not a penny in their pockets, and rather than to go back to Maine and face the "I told you so" of their neigh-

## *Islands of New England*

bors, they scattered to different parts of the country.

The last that was heard of the spellbinder, Parson Adams, was that he finally landed in California, where he turned his talents to absconding with the funds of a bank. There is also a story that one hardy soul refused to leave the Holy Land and stayed on and ran a stage from Jaffa to Jerusalem.



V

## Salt-water Religion

DOWN THE WINDING DIRT ROAD running through the center of the island comes the silent procession, "the walking funeral." The only sounds are the creaking of the wheels of the horse-drawn hearse and the footsteps of the preacher and the mourners as they follow their neighbor to the graveyard, looking out across the sea.

Today lobster boats swing neglected at moorings while the owners pay last respects to their friend. At the outer rim of the harbor, where the water is less shoal, a larger boat, a cruiser, rides at anchor. On the bow stands out boldly a white cross and the name, the *Sunbeam*. Not a man, woman, or child along the whole Maine coast but knows the *Sunbeam*. Whenever misfortune strikes or help is needed, they call the Mission and the *Sunbeam* is on its way.

## *Islands of New England*

On scores of Maine's remote islands and in isolated sections on the coastal mainland are lighthouses and Coast Guard stations and tiny settlements where, in the long Maine winters, life is rugged and harsh. This is the parish of the Maine Sea Coast Mission. To quote from the by-laws of the Society: "The purpose of this Society is to undertake religious and benevolent work in the neglected communities and among the isolated families along the coast and on the islands of Maine, and to engage in all efforts that are calculated to contribute to the moral and spiritual welfare of the people in question."

If you visit the Mission headquarters at Bar Harbor and ask the superintendent, the Reverend Neal Dow Bousfield, to tell you what the Mission does, he may answer rather facetiously, "It might be easier to tell you what it doesn't do. One thing is certain though; without a boat, the Mission could not function. The *Sunbeam* is the pivot around which our work revolves.

"Of course, we do all the usual things that a preacher does anywhere: we marry people and we bury them; we hold church services and make pastoral calls, five thousand or so a year in one hundred and fifty different communities. But it's the unexpected that makes our work so interesting. An accident or sudden illness on some offshore island may mean a hurry-call for the *Sunbeam*, and a race over whitecapped winter sea to the hospital or doctor. Sometimes a whole community is icebound and cut off from the outside world for days at a time. The *Sunbeam* goes to the rescue and punches a path through the ice so that mail and supplies can get through. We never know in the morning what the day may bring, nor for what

## *Salt-water Religion*

port the *Sunbeam* may head before nightfall. For instance, on a recent week end—from Thursday through Monday—this was our cargo: On the forward deck was a casket containing the body of a former island woman being taken to her home for burial. Below was a half-cord of hardwood for the Matinicus church, a secondhand sewing machine for a newly organized island Ladies' Aid, a huge box of rug rags for a shut-in, a mattress for a relief family, books for the lighthouses, a disk harrow, a secondhand lighting plant, over a thousand feet of lumber, window frames and sashes, shingles, a new electric refrigerator, a bridge lamp, a baby's high chair, a row of tubs filled with trawls, and crates and bags belonging to the dozen or more passengers. Oh, yes! in the center of the saloon was a twins' baby carriage, going to Rockland for repairs."

Carrying an island patient to a hospital isn't quite the simple matter that it is with a city ambulance and white-clad orderlies. Four men pick their way down the steep path leading to the shore. They move slowly, for their load is heavy—a woman on an improvised stretcher, a blanket slung between two oars. The patient lies motionless, warmly wrapped, and covered with oilskins. The wind is sharp and biting and the gray Maine sky promises snow before many hours. It is low tide but the woman is too ill to wait for high water, when the *Sunbeam* can make the wharf. As the stretcher-bearers reach the shore, two dories are drawn up, side by side, with men in hip boots standing knee-deep in the icy water and holding them securely. Working quickly in the bitter cold, they transfer the patient to a mattress which is laid between the two

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boats; then in unison, with never a false move, the fishermen row out to the *Sunbeam*, waiting at the mouth of the harbor. They lift the mattress over the side of the boat, place it on a berth in the cabin, and the *Sunbeam* heads for the mainland and the hospital.

State-of-Maine fishermen aren't demonstrative—they are masters of understatement. Most of them do loosen up, though, when they talk about the Mission and the *Sunbeam*.

On some of the outer islands of Penobscot, Blue Hill and Frenchman's Bay, the Mission, in co-operation with the local communities, maintains a nursing service. Miles from a doctor and often miles from a telephone, a Mission nurse is geared for any emergency.

A boy has broken his arm. The one telephone on the island is out of order, so no doctor can be called. The nurse binds temporary splints on the child's arm and dresses him warmly, for he must stay on deck in the open fishing boat. The boat tosses and rolls in the heavy sea; and the patient, wrapped in blankets, is held on the narrow bench by the nurse during the fifteen-mile trip to the doctor on the mainland.

Sometimes the nurse delivers a baby. In the old days, an island woman had her baby at home with a local "granny woman" to attend her; today, she makes her booking well in advance at a mainland hospital and plans to get there in plenty of time. Babies don't always come according to schedule, though, and in an emergency the Mission nurse officiates. In her daily log one nurse wrote, "Coming home tonight from a tough baby case, wading through snow in a northeast gale, I couldn't help thinking of what old

## *Salt-water Religion*

Aunt Julia used to say, 'Babies is awful fools to try to come to islands to live.' "

Nurses also assist in setting up dental clinics. These are held every summer as a co-operative project shared by the Mission and the different communities.

"Yes, we hold dental clinics and tonsil clinics and sometimes eye clinics," Mr. Bousfield explains. "We are Jacks-of-all-trades. What somebody else can do, all well and good; but if they can't do it, we step in and help them out."

It's quite a chore to do the dental work for two hundred and fifty or so children. First, a dentist or dentists must be found who can give the necessary time, then there must be a place to hold the clinics although sometimes the mobile dental trailer from the Maine Department of Health may be used. One year on one island, a Latter-day Saint chapel was used; on another, a vacant house; and on a third island, a schoolhouse. From various sources dental equipment has been assembled at Mission headquarters. This is packed and taken miles across Frenchman's Bay or Jericho Bay or to the outer islands of Penobscot Bay—wherever a clinic is scheduled. Then, with everything organized and the children rounded up, the actual work begins. At a recent series of clinics, over fifteen hundred fillings, extractions, and cleanings were taken care of, even though only one small section of the parish could be served.

Making pastoral visits is routine business to the ordinary clergyman, but a "salt-water" parson never knows what adventure is ahead of him when he sets out for a round

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replaced by a larger boat, and since that time there have been three more boats, each one called the *Sunbeam*.

The present *Sunbeam* is a seventy-two-foot diesel cruiser. Built at a famous old shipyard in Damariscotta, Maine, she was designed especially for ice breaking and to ride the gales of a Down East winter. As you look at the boat, you note an unusually high cutaway bow, thus enabling her to ride out on heavy ice and break it down instead of smashing it. On her trial run, she walked right through ten inches of solid ice without stopping. The forward part of the boat is sheathed with greenheart, a South American wood which compresses under pressure instead of splintering. The explorer MacMillan used this wood on his ship, the *Bowdoin*.

Probably "Ma" Peasley had a lot to do with the planning of the *Sunbeam's* living quarters. Mrs. Peasley, now retired, but for over thirty years on the Mission staff, has cruised in every kind of weather.

"When we were on one of our trips Down East," Mrs. Peasley said, "we were often out for a week or so at a time. That is when we appreciated the snug staterooms and the bathroom. And after we'd climbed over icy paths all the afternoon and stumbled down a slippery ladder into a skiff which took us out to the *Sunbeam*, we certainly did enjoy the fish chowder, the lobster stew, the clam pie, and all the other good things that came out of the trim little galley."

It may be the rhythm of the sea and the endless crashing of the waves against the rocks, the ringing of the bell buoy on half-hidden ledges, or the distant booming of the

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foghorn on the lighthouses off shore; whatever the reason, there's something about the Maine coast that seems to make the people love music. On a summer evening when the sun is going down into the ocean and the western sky is ablaze with color, the little fishing village seems deserted except for the plumes of smoke rising lazily from the supper fires. Just then the *Sunbeam* slips into the harbor and anchors a few hundred feet offshore. Soon strains of music float over the water—"Let the Lower Lights Be Burning," "The Church in the Wildwood," or some other familiar tune. Men, women, and children come out of their houses and gather on the wharf to listen. There is little talking, and a silence seems to brood over everything, broken only by the music and the lapping of the waves.

As the *Sunbeam* cruises the coast, in and out among the islands—through Muscle Ridge Channel, along Fox Islands Thorofare, across Jericho Bay—she often pauses at the end of the day for an hour or two of music. The boat has a well-stocked library of records and an amplifying system, so that sounds may be heard for a distance of more than a mile.

On many days in the year, it is "thick of fog" along the Maine coast. Fishermen in oilskins and sou'westers putter around their bait sheds and work on their lobster traps, getting ready to haul on the next fair day. They eat their midday "mug-up" and smoke their pipes, clustered around the stove in a fish house.

"Thickest fog I ever see," grumbles one.

"Wonder if 'twill ever lift," says another.

Suddenly from off western bell buoy comes a voice piercing the thickness of the fog: "Hello, there!" The

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men come out of the fish house and stand listening. Sometimes, at isolated islands where there is no telephone and landing conditions are difficult, the *Sunbeam* stands offshore and, through a microphone and loud-speaker, delivers necessary messages to the people on shore.

Managing the Maine Sea Coast Mission would seem to most people like running a three-ring circus. So many different things are going on at the same time! Without the *Sunbeam* to hold the thing together much of this work would be impossible.

The *Sunbeam's* schedule calls for about two trips each month, to the west and to the east, but the most important trip of the year is the Santa Claus cruise. Would you ever picture Santa Claus without his sleigh and reindeer? Ask any youngster along the Maine coast how he thinks Santa Claus gets about, and he may well tell you, "Why, by boat, of course—on the *Sunbeam*."

The mission delivers Christmas gifts to approximately twenty-five hundred people, children mainly, and the shut-ins. But lighthouse keepers and Coast Guardmen and even the men on a lightship—all these get presents. All during November the rooms in Bar Harbor are a veritable madhouse, with volunteers working among heaps of clothing, piles of toys, and shelf after shelf of dolls just waiting to go to the right owners. Every child in the parish gets three gifts: something useful—a sweater or socks; something useless but always treasured—a doll or a toy; and, of course, candy. Wrapping and assembling these gifts according to communities is no small task, but around the first week in December the *Sunbeam* is loaded and sets out on the first lap of her Christmas cruise.

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The hold, the saloon, and even the cabins of the little ship are piled high with packages and cartons, labeled with their destinations—Isle au Haut, Burnt Coat Harbor, Great Wass Island, Two Bush Island, Moose Peak Light, Eagle Island. The gifts go to over a hundred different places.

Santa Claus, rolling down from the North Pole and skimming over the ice after his reindeer, has an easy time of it compared with this salt-water Santa Claus. December in Maine can be a rugged season, with the temperature down around zero and the vapor rising from the sea like a fog. Every drop of spray freezes on the ship, and the deckhouse is coated with ice an inch or two thick. The wind may suddenly breeze up and before too many hours the *Sunbeam* is tossing and rolling in a Down East blizzard. Last December one volunteer worker was helped ashore at the end of the trip with two black eyes and a badly battered skull.

"The boat gave a sudden lurch," she said, "and the ceiling became the floor and the floor became the ceiling. I was somewhere in between. When I finally came to, my first thought was, 'I'll bet every doll on the boat is smashed!' But we never heard that a single one was even cracked."

Not every job that the Mission does is dramatic or spectacular. Plenty of the work is just everyday stuff, simple homely things that make life a little easier and brighter. Several times a year the Mission stages a furniture sale. Early in the morning, her decks piled high, the *Sunbeam* sets her course across Frenchman's Bay on the first lap of her Down East cruise. By rocky headlands and the deep

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green of spruce-clad islands, she sails by Pleasant Bay and Schoodic Peninsula, by Petit Manan Island and Nash Island Light, and around noon pulls into Jonesport harbor where she ties up at Beal's Island.

Chairs and tables, beds and bureaus, fill the hold of the boat and spill out over the deck. The tide is in, so landing is easy, and soon the wharf and the fish house nearby are crowded with furniture which fishermen and their wives from that whole section of the coast have come to buy. Used pieces and factory seconds are offered at reasonable prices; and no matter how big the load has been, it is always a sell-out.

That night the *Sunbeam* ties up off Jonesport and the next morning heads to the eastward across Machias Bay, stopping at half a dozen places along the way. Late in the afternoon, she pulls in by Little River Light to Cutler Harbor.

"Movies tonight!"

The word soon gets around and the men shuttle back and forth from the boat to the wharf with all the movie equipment. They set it up in the church at the top of the hill, and that evening they have a full house.

During the winter the *Sunbeam* visits the more remote islands as often as its schedule and the weather will permit, holding religious services, usually every month. In summer the Mission provides volunteer ministers who spend their vacations from their regular city parishes.

The Maine Sea Coast Mission is little known beyond the borders of the state. Among its benefactors have been numbered many prominent "summer people," and grateful friends along the Maine coast. Sigma Kappa national



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sorority has adopted it for its pet project, but one of the amazing things about this organization is the variety of its work and the very narrow limits of its budget. "Getting along on what you have" has always been a good Yankee maxim.



## V I

# Mount Desert Island

SINCE THE GAY NINETIES—and even before—Bar Harbor has been recognized as one of America's most fashionable resorts. Known as late as 1918 by the name Eden, Bar Harbor is only one of several communities that make up the island of Mount Desert.

The early history of Mount Desert Island is full of color and romance. As far back as 1000 A.D. the Norsemen may have visited this section, but Richard Walden Hale, Jr., in his recent book *The Story of Bar Harbor*, is skeptical. He writes:

. . . with an active imagination, one can put at or near Bar Harbor the homestead where Gudrid gave birth to Snorri Karsevnisen, the first white child in America, and the huts where Freydis murdered the five women.

On a slightly more authentic basis, historically (and a little less gruesome), are tales of later visits by Portuguese

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and Italian explorers, who contributed nothing, however, to the development of the region. But in 1604 the Frenchman, Samuel de Champlain, sailed down the coast from De Monts's settlement on St. Croix Island in Passamaquoddy Bay to do some exploring and mapmaking. It was this much-traveled Champlain who saw the island and named it Mount Desert.

Much of its early history is reflected in the present-day names of this section. Across the waters off Bar Harbor sailed the adventurous Pierre le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, and for several years French frigates used this spot as a meeting place. Hence the name Frenchman's Bay.

After a hazardous trip across the Bay of Fundy, a party of Jesuits, under the patronage of the colorful Madame de Guercheville, sailed down the coast and put in by the Porcupine Islands, landing on the eastern shore of Mount Desert. Here, in gratitude for their delivery from the dangers they had encountered, the pious fathers dropped on their knees in prayer, calling the spot where they landed Saint Sauveur—today the name of a mountain and of Bar Harbor's picturesque Episcopal church.

Asticou was an Indian chief who lived near the shores of Somes Sound and was one of the first converts to be baptized by the Jesuits. The memory of this chieftain lingers on in the name of the little settlement of Asticou near the present town of Northeast Harbor.

In 1688 Mount Desert Island was granted to Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac, who later founded Detroit. Beautiful Mount Cadillac gets its name from this Frenchman who lived almost three centuries ago. Years later, after the American Revolution, Cadillac's granddaughter, Ma-

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dame Thérèse de Gregoire, settled on the island and spent the rest of her life there. She is buried in the village cemetery at Hulls Cove.

Called by many the most beautiful island off the coast of Maine, Mount Desert is a happy combination of mountain, sea, and lakes. One of the most spectacular inlets is Somes Sound, a narrow body of water extending five miles between cliffs in some places one hundred fifty feet in height. This has been called an American fiord. With numerous smaller inlets and many excellent harbors, the island is sixteen miles long and a dozen miles wide.

In the early days, when travelers crossed to the mainland by ferry, Mount Desert seemed truly an island. But today, with a modern bridge across the Narrows, the visitor is scarcely conscious that he is going onto an island—except when he must wait for the lowering of the draw-bridge.

Bar Harbor has always been a name to conjure with—a name synonymous with wealth and great estates. But Seal Harbor, Northeast and Southwest Harbors, and other sections of the island also have many beautiful showplaces.

For several years Mount Desert, largely due to the influence and money of its summer people, barred automobiles from its roads, but finally, in 1913, pressure became so great that the bars were let down. Today a trip to Cadillac Mountain and a drive around the island is the high spot in any visit to Maine.

The one-day tourist can see a little of Mount Desert—but not too much. The road around the island runs close

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to the shore in many places, with broad views across the sparkling waters of Frenchman's Bay and here and there an island, while off in the distance looms up Grindstone Point at the tip end of Grindstone Neck.

A short distance out of Bar Harbor is the entrance to Acadia National Park, which includes Cadillac Mountain and is the only national park on the Atlantic coast. The ascent to the summit is gradual, and each turn reveals another view, seemingly more beautiful than the last. At the very top the whole world is spread out before you. Below is the ocean, with close at hand the low-lying Porcupines hugging the very shores of the island. Off in the distance are more islands, and on a clear day Matinicus, forty miles to the west, may barely be seen. In the opposite direction rises Mount Katahdin over one hundred miles away. The tragedy, to a visitor with only one day to spend on the island, may be in picking a day when it's "thick o' fog," and then it's like standing on the top of the world in a swirling mass of clouds with not a thing to be seen.

The loveliest time of the day to enjoy Mount Cadillac is an hour or so before sundown. Then the changing colors of sky and sea range all the way from the deepest and most brilliant to the muted tones which merge with the twilight as darkness falls over the land and water. Then, far out to sea on Mount Desert Rock, and nearer at hand in a dozen other beacons, the lights come on and the ocean seems studded with blinking fireflies.

Acadia National Park includes, curiously enough, a section on the mainland at Schoodic Peninsula below Winter Harbor as well as part of Isle au Haut. The main park reservation on Mount Desert is a hiker's paradise, with

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over two hundred miles of trails and bridle paths, well marked yet wandering through forest, little touched by man. Weeks could be spent on the island in hiking and climbing, and a new point of interest discovered every day.

Great names have been commonplace on Mount Desert since the early days when Harvard's president, Dr. Charles W. Eliot, sailed his boat on Frenchman's Bay and advised the natives to get busy and preserve the natural beauties and resources of the island. It was due to Eliot and George Bucknam Dorr—perhaps more than to any other two people—that the Acadia National Park was formed.

The best way to see the village of Bar Harbor is on foot. You can ramble along the shaded streets where the natives live in comfortable unpretentious houses, explore the waterfront with its great estates, and browse around the attractive summer shops that line the main streets.

A short distance out of the village, Ocean Drive takes you along the shore with superb views across Frenchman's Bay. On this road is the famous Thunder Hole, a deep cleft in the rock—a "guzzle," the islanders call it. Here the water comes in with such terrific force that it rises many feet in the air, sounding like a continuous thunderstorm. Other points of interest along this section of the island are Sieur de Monts Spring and the Abbe Museum, where relics of early Indian culture have been assembled.

Continuing on around the island, Seal Harbor, Northeast and Southwest Harbors are happy blends of small-town villages and some of the finest estates on the whole coast.

It was on Mount Desert that the dowager said to the

## Mount Desert Island

local storekeeper, "And what do you do, my good man, after the summer people leave?"

"We fumigate, ma'am—we fumigate," he replied.

For the visitor in not too much of a hurry, there are many short drives and boat trips to interesting places in the Mount Desert region. A drive to the Jordan Pond House and a meal in that famous old hotel is always a favorite trip.

Probably for many years on Mount Desert events will be dated from the time of the Great Fire in October 1947. So great was the impact of the news that metropolitan newspapers carried it in headlines, and even the Paris *Figaro* featured it as a great conflagration in a small Maine town. A conflagration, they went on to say, set by local peasants as a protest against the occupation of their town by the rich aristocracy.

The extent of the damage was tremendous. Over 50 per cent of the area of Bar Harbor was burned, destroying 237 homes (summer cottages and year-round residences) and three of the major hotels—the De Gregoire, the Belmont and the Malvern. But out of the ashes emerged the old-time State-of-Maine spirit, and within two days after the fire a citizens' committee had been formed to pull the town together. Realizing that a good hotel was necessary to maintain the principal industry of the town—the summer business—long before a year had passed the capital needed for the building had been raised and the town was well on its way to complete recovery.

One of the best-known projects on the island, renowned the world over, is the Roscoe B. Jackson Memorial Labo-

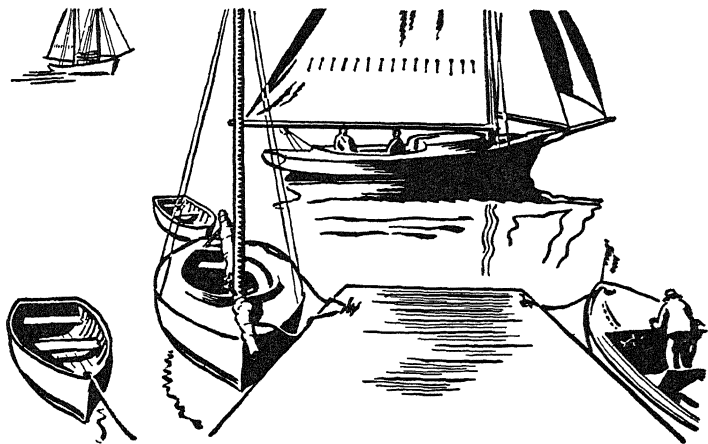
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ratory where one of the largest mice colonies in existence is maintained for research and study of cancer. One of the great tragedies of the Bar Harbor fire was the loss of 100,000 mice whose family histories extended back through many generations. However, so great was the response of the public, and other laboratories which had strains and case records of the original mice, to the needs of replacement and rebuilding of the Jackson Laboratory, its research library, and its colonies of animals, that now the institution is operating on a greatly enlarged scale. The laboratory is open to visitors at certain hours on weekdays.

In addition to the new Bar Harbor Hotel, one of the finest along the entire coast, there are today many fine tourist homes and motor courts to take care of the thousands of guests who visit the island annually. The nearest railroad to Bar Harbor is at Ellsworth, 20 miles away, from which point bus service connects with incoming and outgoing trains.

As a sign of the changing times, the huge Stotesbury mansion, one of the largest and most ornate of the resort community's fabulous summer estates, will be torn down soon to make room for the local terminus of the Yarmouth, Nova Scotia-Bar Harbor ferry. But Bar Harbor residents don't feel too badly about the fate of the Stotesbury estate. Many feel that if it puts the period on the end of one era, construction of the ferry terminal will be the beginning of another.





## V I I

# The Cranberry Isles

JUST WHO first called these the Cranberry Isles, we do not know. Antoine de la Mothe, Sieur de Cadillac, in his memoirs of 1692, in which he describes for King Louis XIV the coasts of Acadia, gives them no name. More than likely it was early settlers—Bunkers or Stanwoods or even Jonathan Stanley and his French wife, Margarita Le Croix, an exiled Acadian—who spoke of these islands as the “Cranberry islands” because of the small red berries which in the fall make a crimson carpet of their bogs and marshes.

Great Cranberry, Little Cranberry (Islesford village), Sutton, Baker, and Bear Islands comprise this group, and in the early days were a corporate part of the town of Mount Desert. Among the archives in the Sawtelle Museum in Islesford is the original petition asking the legislature that the town of Cranberry Isles be separated from

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the town of Mount Desert. The reasons for separation are given below.

*To the Honourable Senate and house of Representatives of the State of Maine to be assembled in Portland on the first day of January, A.D. 1830:*

The subscribers, Inhabitants of the Great and Little Cranberry Islands together with Sutons and Bakers Islands, situated in the town of Mount Desert, County of Hancock & State of Maine, ask Leave to represent that they live on Said Islands Situated as follows—that they have all or nearly all their trade and business and common connections with them and among themselves on Said Islands, and that Said Islands contain about nineteen hundred acres of Land, with thirty-three families and upward of two hundred inhabitants and are at the nearest passage by water at the South one mile distant from the Island of Mount Desert which renders it very inconvenient for them to attend their public business and meetings of Public Worship which business is transacted from six to ten miles distance from the center of said Islands and in fact it is often the case that they cannot attend at all on account of high winds and sometimes the passage from Said Islands to the Island of Mount Desert being frozen over or Jamed full of Ice. They ask Leave further to represent that the remaining part of Mount Desert contains a large territory and that the inhabitants may be much better accommodated than they now are in the plan of transacting their public business wherefore they pray the Honourable Legislature to set up and Incorporate the aforesaid Islands in a town by name of Cranberry Isle with all the rights and privileges that appertain to other Towns and as in duty found will ever pray.

*Signed,* ENOCH SPURLING

AND OTHERS

*A true copy—Attest*

JOHN G. BOWEN

## *The Cranberry Isles*

The arguments were logical and sound and the separation went into effect almost immediately.

Travel-wise people everywhere know Cadillac Mountain and the magnificent panorama from the summit, with the irregular spots of land far below that make up the Cranberry group lying fairly close to the shore. It is only the traveler who has actually been on the islands, though, who realizes that the view in reverse is equally superb, with the sweep of mountains along the horizon and the wooded slopes of Mount Desert rising above the blue waters of Frenchman's Bay.

The largest of the islands, Great Cranberry, has less than nine hundred acres all told, and much of it wooded and in rough pasture land. On the northeast side is the great Pool, where at low tide not even a dory can float but at high water a good-sized vessel can navigate. A road runs through the center of the island from Spurling Point almost to Deadman Point on the southeast. Along this road, and on several short dirt roads branching from it, live the island people, both the all-year residents and the summer folks.

Not far from the church on the main road you can take a path through the woods to the back shore of the island, where across the waters of Western Way you see the hills of Mount Desert and the white houses in Seawall. Sliding along the pebbly beach you come to a tiny house, once painted a bright gay red but now faded and desolate-looking. Lopsided curtains hang at the two windows and the only signs of life are the small noises of the birds in the underbrush around the cabin. Here lived Samuel C. Sanford, a tall spare man with a white beard, a familiar

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figure along the road and shores of Great Cranberry until his death nearly twenty years ago. The islanders called him Sammy and still speak of him with affection. They tell of the day when Rachel Field, the writer from nearby Sutton Island, was walking through the woods on Great Cranberry and unexpectedly met, on a narrow path, the tall old man. "Don't be frightened," he said as she started with surprise. "You're just as safe as if you was in God's pocket."

From this chance meeting, which ripened into friendship, came Miss Field's delightful book, *God's Pocket*. Sammy liked to talk of Grandmother and Grandfather Hadlock, and from these reminiscences and from Samuel Hadlock's own journal and family documents in the Sawtelle Museum on Islesford, Miss Field pieced together the incredible story of Captain Samuel Hadlock, Junior, and his beautiful Prussian bride.

It was in the year 1822 that young Sam Hadlock, in his thirtieth year, left the Cranberry Islands with an Eskimo couple, several stuffed seals and birds and a variety of native weapons—spears, harpoons, and the like—to show his curiosities and the Eskimos in foreign lands. What a sight they must have been! The six-foot State-of-Mainer in a tall beaver hat and a fitted greatcoat of olive green or maroon, with the Eskimos trailing behind him as he made his way down the narrow streets of the English and Irish towns. For several months the showman visited Dublin and Irish and English provincial cities, and it was not until nearly two years later that he set foot on the Continent.

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Hadlock liked Germany. The well-kept countryside appealed to his State-of-Maine upbringing and, besides, his affairs prospered mightily. It was when he reached Berlin and decided to put on his show at nearby Charlottenburg that his amazing love story started. It was truly "love at first sight," and less than three months later Dorethea Albertina Wilhelmina Celeste Russ became Mrs. Samuel Hadlock, Junior. For nearly two years the young couple toured the capitals of Europe, halting in Paris for the birth of Jane Matilda, who years later was to become the mother of old Sammy Sanford.

Not too long ago there were people still living on Big Cranberry who remembered the Prussian lady, Hannah Caroline, as she was always called—for what Yankee could ever manage such an outlandish mouthful as Dorethea Albertina Wilhelmina Celeste? Today, as you walk up from the boat landing and down the island, you can see on your right a large two-and-a-half-story white house. This is where, they tell you, the Prussian lady lived during her brief marriage to Samuel Hadlock, who never returned from a sealing expedition to the Arctic, and here she lived for many years thereafter.

One of the pleasures of Great Cranberry Island is the ease in getting there. A mere ten minutes from Southwest Harbor, and there you are. A mail boat runs daily all year round, as well as a frequent ferry boat during the summer months, connecting also with Islesford on Little Cranberry Island.

Little Cranberry has only about half the area of Great

## *Islands of New England*

Cranberry, but is an active community with year-round residents and summer people. In the early days ships from Cranberry Isles sailed the "Seven Seas," and many are the tales of the early islanders and their exploits. At the time of the Napoleonic Wars, when the demand for food in neutral countries was at an all-time high, Samuel Hadlock of Little Cranberry set out for the Grand Banks in his schooner, the *Ocean*. Here he soon got a load of fish, which he cured and salted on the rocks at Labrador; then, with a full hold, he sailed for Oporto, Portugal. Evading the English and French warships, which were on the lookout for American vessels, he sailed into the harbor at Oporto and disposed of his fish at a good high figure.

For many years William Otis Sawtelle of Pennsylvania, a Haverford College professor and a Cranberry Isles summer resident, talked with the older inhabitants of the islands and collected records, maps, pictures, furniture and china, figureheads of ships, and interesting relics of the early days. For a while these were housed in an old store, which was replaced a few years later by a fireproof building at Islesford, known as the Sawtelle Museum. During the summer months this museum is usually open to visitors.

Like so many other Maine coastal islands, Sutton Island was once well populated with year-round residents. Now in winter it is deserted, as the summer folks leave with the coming of fall.

At the southwest entrance to Frenchman's Bay stands Baker Island with its lighthouse, which is a well-known landmark to yachtsmen cruising along the coast. It was

## *The Cranberry Isles*

on Baker Island that the Gilleys settled and it was John Gilley who was drowned in 1896 between Sutton Island and Northeast Harbor, about whom President Eliot of Harvard University wrote the American classic *John Gilley, Maine Farmer and Fisherman*.

One of the most talked-about events along this coast—second only, doubtless, to the great fire of 1947—was the arrival in August 1914 of the great German liner *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*. It was from Baker Island lighthouse that the keeper first spied the great ship emerging from the fog. She had left New York on her regular run to Bremen. When part way across the Atlantic the captain had been advised by wireless to open an envelope in the ship's vaults, marked "Siegfried." The message inside was curt and to the point: "War has been declared. Turn back!" In addition to many passengers, the ship carried a fortune in gold consigned by a New York bank to a bank in Europe. As the result of its nondelivery, there was lengthy litigation to determine the ship's responsibility at the outbreak of a war. A woman passenger had the shock of her lifetime when she awoke in the morning and peered out of her porthole, expecting to see the sights of Bremen's harbor, and found that she was looking at her own cottage in Bar Harbor.

Tiny Bear Island, situated inshore just off Northeast Harbor, has had a lighthouse for over a hundred years and is entirely government-owned. The round white tower with a broad balcony stands just separated from the dwelling and is a familiar landmark to Mount Desert yachtsmen. This lighthouse overlooks the course of the famous

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Northeast Harbor Fleet, where every summer fifty or more sailing craft of all sizes hold their annual cruise. The keeper and his mates at Bear Island have grandstand seats for this event.





## V I I I

# Some Island Lighthouses

AN EXCITING TRIP from Matinicus is to go in a lobster boat five miles straight out to sea to Matinicus Rock Light. On the way, you pass Tenpound and Ragged Islands, skirting The Hogshead, Green Ledge and Brig Ledge, where fat sleek seals are apt to be sunning themselves. Off to the eastward, Wooden Ball and Seal Islands look bare and forbidding. Perched high on a massive ledge of over thirty acres, with not even a single tree or shrub to relieve its desolation, is Matinicus Rock Light, one of the outermost lighthouses off the Maine coast, built in 1827 after a number of vessels had been wrecked in the area. This fortresslike island is unique as one of the few resting places of the puffin, or sea parrot, a comparatively rare bird along the coast.

Today Matinicus Rock is a "stag" light, but prior to World War II the keepers' families lived in the comfort-

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able houses connected with the tower. For several years a school was held, and over a century ago a little girl was born on the Rock but lived only a few days. Now she lies buried in a deep fissure in the granite, the open end walled up with brick.

"It's a tough spot to land," they tell you on Matinicus. "Only a summer or two ago—on a really pretty day, too, but the sea was choppy—the Coast Guard crew started to haul a dory up the slip, a big wave came in and the dory capsized, throwing a boy overboard. Before they could do a thing about it, the boy had drowned."

Winter is the time, though, when the weather gets really rugged, and for weeks at a time no boat is able to land. The most thrilling of the many stories of the Rock is of a seventeen-year-old girl, Abby Burgess, whose father was a lightkeeper for many years. It was January 1856. The lighthouse cutter had failed to make its regular autumn call and supplies and food were getting dangerously low. There was nothing to do but to go to the mainland twenty-five miles away—a long trip in winter by sail in an open boat. Leaving an invalid wife and three small children—and Abby to care for the family and the light—Captain Burgess set off for Rockland. Hardly had he been gone a day when the wind veered to the northeast and it started to "breeze up." For days the storm increased in intensity, and long before daylight of the fourth day, great waves battered against the heavy granite building and swept over the island, carrying away many of the outer buildings.

"For four weeks," Abby wrote, "owing to rough weather, no landing could be effected on the Rock. Dur-

## *Some Island Lighthouses*

ing this time we were without assistance of any male member of the family. Though at times greatly exhausted with my labors, not once did the lights fail. Under God I was able to perform all my accustomed duties as well as my father's."

For nearly forty years Abby Burgess Grant lived at Matinicus Rock Light and then at Whitehead Island Light. Shortly before her death, she wrote from Whitehead to a friend: "Sometimes I think the time is not far distant when I shall climb these lighthouse stairs no more. . . . I wonder if the care of the lighthouse will follow my soul after it has left this worn-out body! If I ever have a gravestone, I would like it in the form of a lighthouse or beacon."

In 1892 Abby died and was buried in the Spruce Head cemetery, not far from her beloved Whitehead Island Light. For over 50 years her grave was marked only by a conventional stone, but on Armistice Day, 1945, her wish was finally gratified. A miniature lighthouse was dedicated on the final resting place of Abby Burgess Grant.

As an aftermath of the storm of November 26, 1950, for the first time in over a century Matinicus Rock Light was dark. In the Rockland *Courier-Gazette*, one of the lightkeepers described the havoc:

The storm of November 26 forced the personnel to clear out of the main single dwelling and head for the storm shelter. Everything was moving off the island for a few hours. . . .

The 225 foot passageway connecting the dwelling to the lighthouse lower deck is completely carried away; the

## *Islands of New England*

chicken coops are gone; the single dwelling used as a store-house and Audubon unit group house, when the bird folks are out here in the summer for their study and instruction periods, is completely gone down over the island, and is just right for stove-size burning wood.

The double dwelling house has all the east-side shingles torn off as if a razor was used to pry them loose; the coal storage house had over 50 tons of nut coal stored in the house and was upended on its side and all that held this house was the weight of the coal; all the windows were cleaned out of this house, this in turn was a help as it gave the wind a clear path through.

The double dwelling has had three feet of salt water in the lower floor rooms, and the dwelling we are quartered in had two feet of salt water on the lower decks; some of these have now buckled badly. All had to be shoveled and rewashed three to four times to get the ashes and sods dirt out of the floors.

The seawall let go first and battered in the whistle house northeast wall and the hoisting-engine winch-house behind the whistle house was battered and the engine a twisted mass of junk. The seas then ran wild all over the engine room, soaking compressors, engines, generators, batteries, radio-beacon equipment, completely ruined and all out of commission due to salt water and seas running madly through the broken down wall and out the doors on the west side down the hill back to the sea.

The main light had its storm glass blown completely out and the whole foot of the tower soaked with incoming seas and spray. At times the spray carried over the top of the catwalks around the light. All walks are carried away and the tramway is to be rebuilt as it was carried like a snake in various shapes and twisted rails.

One of the most isolated lighthouses along the entire Atlantic coast is Mount Desert Rock, over twenty miles

## *Some Island Lighthouses*

from the nearest harbor on Mount Desert Island. Unlike Matinicus Rock, which has neighbors five miles away, this stark bare ledge stands alone with only the ocean stretching far in every direction.

It has long been the custom each spring to carry bags of garden soil from the mainland to the Rock and to cram it into every possible crevice and niche in the ledges. Then all kinds of flower seeds of hardy varieties are planted in the earth, and by late summer and early fall brilliant patches of color stand out here and there. But with the heavy winds of late fall and winter, every trace of earth blows away.

About fifteen miles straight out to sea from Cutler is a small, low-lying island—treeless but grassy Machias Seal Island. The island belongs to the States but is leased to the Canadian government, which maintains a lighthouse there. Picturesque as is the red and white lighthouse, the island's greatest charm is in the abundance of bird life to be seen. On Machias Seal and on only one other spot along the Maine coast, Matinicus Rock, do the puffins breed. There are several prosperous colonies on Puffin Island and the Gannet Islands on the Labrador coast, but Machias Seal and Matinicus Rock are the only breeding places this side of Newfoundland. Fishermen call these comical-looking birds "sea parrots." The puffin stands up like a small penguin with a dazzling white breast and black feathers on the back. Its markings around the eyes make it look for all the world as if it were peering through spectacles, but the funniest thing of all is its huge brightly colored bill.

At Matinicus Rock and Machias Seal Island the puffins

## *Islands of New England*

lay one egg—rarely, two eggs—in deep cracks in the rocks, using no nesting material but depositing the egg right among the boulders on the bare rock—but so well concealed are the nests that they are difficult to find. Puffins are among the most picturesque of our birds and it is hoped that continued protection will cause them to increase in numbers. Fortunately the Canadian government has made a sanctuary of Machias Seal Island and prohibits the collecting of birds and eggs, even for scientific study. The lighthouse keeper acts as warden and keeps an eye out for intruders.

One of the tales often told along the coast is of the tragic sinking of the Canadian vessel *Royal Tar*, over a century ago. It was near Saddleback Ledge in East Penobscot Bay, three years before a lighthouse was built on that treacherous spot, that the *Royal Tar*, bound from St. John, New Brunswick, to Portland, caught fire during a heavy gale. In addition to a passenger list of about one hundred, the vessel had a circus aboard—horses, camels, lions, an elephant, a tiger, not to mention various birds and serpents. Pandemonium reigned and animals and humans jumped overboard. All the animals were lost, along with over half of the human beings.

Saddleback Ledge is still a treacherous spot, not the place one would care to visit just any day in the year. Even in the best of weather, it's quite an experience to pay a call on Saddleback. A hoisting beam is swung out from the rock, the visitor climbs into a bosun's chair and is pulled ashore.

## Some Island Lighthouses

One of the most dangerous places along the entire coast is between Narraguagus Bay and Frenchman's Bay where, on a tiny island, the government in 1817 erected a lighthouse. This island, Petit Manan (called locally "Titmanan"), lies about fourteen miles east of Bar Harbor and is joined to the mainland at Petit Manan Point by a dangerous reef. Petit Manan Point is the section beloved by Mary Ellen Chase, who has written so warmly of her state, and near here she spends her summers in her home "Windswept," also the title of one of her most famous novels. A tall stately tower, Petit Manan Light rises to a height of 119 feet and has one of the strongest beams on the entire Maine coast.

Formerly the lighthouse service was under the Treasury Department and the keepers were civilians, many of whom, with their families, spent their entire working years in these lonely outposts. Only a few of these civilian keepers still remain, and they are stationed, in most cases, on mainland or island lights close inshore. Much of the color has gone out of lighthouse service since these men have been replaced by Coast Guardmen, many of whom are young boys from the Middle West who, as one fisherman said, "don't know one end of a boat from another." You can read about lighthouses in the *Maine Coast Fisherman*, a chatty little publication that covers the fishing news of the coast. Two of the popular sections are "God's Tugboat," reporting the activities of the Sea Coast Mission boat *Sunbeam*, and "Life at the Light Station" where lighthouse keepers exchange news and jokes. One

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man, alone with his cat on his island station, reported that the cat almost got blown off the island one windy day, but the man allowed that he had the problem licked: "I put an eye splice in his tail, and he drops it over a spike in a rock when the wind picks up."





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# Matinicus and Criehaven

YEARS AGO, before lobstermen became "captains of finance," fishermen and their families along the Maine coast ate periwinkles—"wrinkles" they called them. Old Uncle Jim Condon on Matinicus Island, who had a large growing family, was a deeply religious man and always asked a blessing before meals. Sometimes it ran like this:

Dear Lord—divide this food around amongst us—give Alden his share—give Bill his share—don't give Seth any, he is so eternal lazy, he don't deserve any. For Christ's sake, Amen—Jimmy git out of them 'ere wrinkles.

Today, several generations later, folks on Matinicus no longer eat "wrinkles," but in plenty of ways the island is unchanged and is one of the least spoiled places in Maine's

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great coastal vacation land. The same family names still persist—Young, Ames, and Philbrook. Vestiges of the old way of speech linger on. If a fisherman hopes for fair weather, he listens for the “rote at the west’ard.” His wife takes the “orts” out to the hens and the boy “boats” himself across the harbor in his “peapod.”

Matinicus lies twenty miles straight out to sea from Rockland. Excepting Ragged Island, or Criehaven, and barren Matinicus Rock where the lighthouse stands, nothing but ocean lies between Matinicus and Spain.

The staunch little sixty-foot mail boat, the *Mary A.*, carries you to the island. “Better be on the wharf here at seven-thirty sharp,” says the youthful Captain Stuart Ames. “I aim to leave right on the dot.” Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays are summer boat-days, cut down to two trips per week for the winter months.

From the water Rockland seems snugged down along the shore of Penobscot Bay. Back of it rise the Camden hills with, off to the west, the twin plumes of smoke that mark the cement plant at Thomaston. On a “pretty” day, as you chug across the harbor on the *Mary A.*, the scores of windows in the huge Samoset Hotel blink in the early morning sunlight. You pass Owls Head Light, dazzling white against the green of the spruces with the carmine red of the chimneys making it one of the most photogenic lighthouses along the coast. Out to the open sea past Monroe Island and the mouth of Muscle Ridge Channel—and soon a low-lying shadow becomes land—Matinicus.

The *Mary A.* slips past the wooded end of the island, by Marky’s beach, and around the breakwater into the harbor. Everywhere you look there is color—from the

## *Matinicus and Criehaven*

deep green of the spruces through the faded red of the Centennial building to the harsh yellow of Wes's new fish-house. Lobster buoys of every shape and shade hanging on the bait sheds—gulls wheeling overhead—dories bobbing at the moorings, keeping watch while the powerboats are out to haul. For here on Matinicus Lobster is King, and except for an occasional fling at seining practically every male, from youngsters in their early teens to men in their eighties, have their strings of traps.

Unlike many of the Maine coastal islands, the settlement on Matinicus wanders far away from the harbor. At least as far as it can, within the confines of slightly over seven hundred acres and within the boundaries of two miles in length and less than a mile in width. From the north end almost to Southern Point, the road runs straight through the center of the island. As you walk down this road or ride its rutty length in one of the ancient cars, you pass prosperous-looking houses set in fields gay with buttercups and daisies and wild roses, against a background of the green of the spruce trees. The air is clear and salty and, in late June, fragrant with the scent of wild strawberries. You can hear the muted sound of the waves against the shore, and off in the distance the clang of the bell buoy to the westward.

At the south end, the white Cape Cod houses look out across the water to the little settlement of Criehaven on Ragged Island, and beyond to the open sea where the great mass of Matinicus Rock looms up and the polished glass in the lighthouse tower catches the rays of sunlight and reflects them back like diamonds. Over on Tenpound Island you can just make out the sheep as they graze on

## *Islands of New England*

the western slope. In the channel between the islands, an occasional seal swims lazily around, lifting up his head from time to time as if curious to see what is going on.

You can sit on the back shore on Matinicus on a lovely summer day, with the sky a deep blue and the green of the spruces at your back shutting off the rest of the island. The surf breaks against the rocks below, and a few hundred feet offshore a lobsterman is hauling his traps. Off on the distant horizon are Green Island and Metinic—and farthest of all, the gray blur that is Monhegan Island, eighteen miles away.

The early history of Matinicus follows the pattern of many of the other settlements along the coast. The Norsemen probably touched its shore—who really knows?—various fishing stands were located here and the Indians visited it from time to time, hunting sea birds and eggs for food. It wasn't until the middle of the eighteenth century, however, that there was a permanent white settler, Ebenezer Hall. Around 1750, with his wife, son and four small children, he came to this lonely island to make his home.

From the very first he seems to have been a fractious individual who liked to have his own way. He insisted on burning over the outlying islands to improve the forage for his sheep. The Indians objected strenuously, but Ebenezer went right ahead. In an interesting document on file in the Massachusetts Archives, the Indians appealed to the governor of the Province, but to no avail. Finally, in 1757, when Ebenezer Junior—fortunately for his numerous descendants—was away on the mainland, the Indians came

## *Matinicus and Criebaven*

to the island and, after a skirmish that lasted for several days, Ebenezer Senior was killed and, so the story runs, scalped, and his wife and four small children taken captives. You can see the bronze tablet today not far from the post office and on the very spot where Ebenezer's log house stood:

EBENEZER HALL  
THE FIRST WHITE SETTLER  
ON MATINICUS ISLE, MAINE  
KILLED BY THE INDIANS  
JUNE 6, 1757

John Crie was another early settler. He came to Matinicus by way of the Revolution—but, alas, from the British side! When a young lad of sixteen, John was walking along the streets of Glasgow. Suddenly he was seized by soldiers and, the first thing he knew, he was in the British Army. For nearly five years young Crie was stationed at Fort George, now Castine, Maine. In 1783 he was honorably discharged from the Army and was given his choice: to return to Glasgow or stay in America. He chose the latter. What brought the young man to Matinicus we do not know, but arrive he did, and not too long after married Mary Hall, the daughter of Ebenezer Junior. Here John Crie lived for the rest of his days. Now he lies in the little graveyard near the center of the island with a gray slate stone to mark his resting place.

During World War II life on Matinicus struck an all-time low. Nearly every young man was in the service, mainly the Navy and Coast Guard. Other families were over on the "earth" working in war plants. The Maine Sea Coast Mission boat, the *Sunbeam*, came monthly to

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hold services at the little church, but one year the children were too few in number to maintain a school. But the island was lucky at that, for every man in the service came home unharmed. The only casualty was not in the war zone but right on the island. One morning, down on the western shore, a middle-aged lobsterman picked up a curious-looking contrivance. As he was starting to examine it, the object exploded, blowing off one hand and several fingers on the other. What he had picked up was a mine that had been washed ashore.

In politics, Matinicus is predominantly Republican. The politicians gather in "Lin" Young's boat shop and "touch up" the administration in Washington. When Margaret Chase Smith came up for election as United States Senator, they allowed that "Margaret was a good girl and worked hard down to Washington." She got every vote on the island.

They tell the story that once when F. D. R. was cruising along the Maine coast, his boat put in to Rockland. An island boy was over on the "main" at the time. When he got back home, a neighbor said, "You must have seen the President, didn't you, Bill?"

"Well," drawled the young man, "I was down near there working on my bo-at. There seemed to be a lot of noise and fuss, but I didn't look up."

Today, life is pleasant on Matinicus. Nearly every serviceman is back with a wife and baby. There is a good-sized school and dances and parties almost every week. All the houses are occupied and a new one is being built by a Young, the sixth-generation Young on the island.

Many of the islanders keep cars in Rockland and make

## *Matinicus and Criehaven*

frequent trips to Boston—and even beyond. Some fly back and forth to the mainland when the weather is right.

It's a spectacular approach to the island to come by air. You leave the Rockland airport in a tiny Piper Cub and look down on the island-studded bay. In twelve minutes or so, you are over a pocket-handkerchief of land edged about by high cliffs with green spruces as a backdrop. Below you are tiny sandy beaches with miniature boats bobbing at their moorings. . . . What would the old-timers sleeping in the little cemetery in the center of the island think of such an approach?

Ragged Island, or Criehaven, lies less than a mile beyond Matinicus. The Indians called the island "Racket-ash," later corrupted to "Ragged Ass," which name eventually gave place to "Ragged Island," and it is by this last name that it is known on the government charts. Ragged Island is a mere three hundred acres in area, less than half the acreage of Matinicus. Here on Ragged Island, Elisabeth Ogilvie lived, and here is the Bennett's Island of her three novels: *High Tide at Noon*, *Storm Tide*, and *The Ebbing Tide*. No writer of modern fiction has given more beautiful descriptions or truer pictures of life on Maine's off-shore islands.



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## More Islands of Penobscot Bay

THE MAINE COASTLINE hangs down into the Atlantic like the ragged hem of a garment. The biggest gouge of all is Penobscot Bay. The *United States Coast Pilot* tells us: “. . . [it] is about 20 miles wide from Isle au Haut on the east to Whitehead Island on the west and 28 miles long from its entrance to the mouth of Penobscot River.”

Geologists call this section a “drowned coastline,” a most descriptive term. You can picture some mighty giant—the scientists call it “the Ice Age”—pushing down on the land surface and depressing it to such a point that when the ice melted and the water level rose only the tops of ridges and mountains showed. These are our islands and bold headlands—the “rockbound coast of Maine.”

The islands in this bay range all the way from bare and desolate ledges that hardly show their heads even at low water up to small empires of several thousand acres with



## *More Islands of Penobscot Bay*

most of the conveniences of mainland living. Because of the "pretty" days when the sea and the sky seem to be running a race to see which can be bluer, because of the cool and gentle breezes that blow when the temperature on the "main" rises close to the 100° mark, and because there is something about an island that brings release to a tired man's soul, vacationists are coming to this region in ever-increasing numbers.

The busy city of Rockland, with its waterfront abustle with lobster and fish buying and selling, lime kilns, boat shops, and a Coast Guard base, is the "taking-off place" for several of the larger islands in Penobscot Bay. The traveler sailing out of the harbor will see, on the left, the imposing mass of the Samoset Hotel and the mile-long bar with a lighthouse at its tip which is the Rockland break-water. On the right is the high wave-swept promontory of Owls Head with its picture-book lighthouse. Here, on a fine summer day during the last half of the 1800's, the bay would be studded with the white sails of ships plying up and down the river in the lumber trade. Here, in 1854, out of Rockland Harbor sailed the wonder ship of the century, the clipper ship *Red Jacket*. Never from that day to this has her record been equaled: a voyage from New York to England in thirteen days and one hour—under sail!

A daily boat service connects Rockland with two of the larger islands of the bay, North Haven and Vinalhaven, known formerly as the Fox Islands. Back in 1603 when Martin Pring sailed through the channel that separates these islands, he was delighted to see silver foxes playing along the shore. Today this narrow reach is known as Fox

## *Islands of New England*

Islands Thorofare, or the Thorofare, and is a scenic short cut from the eastern to the western part of the bay.

The Maine coast is a place of curious and sometimes romantic names for islands and ledges, always a fertile conversation piece as to their origin. In this section of Penobscot Bay are Colt, Old Horse, Drunkard, Mouse, Goose, Fox Ears, Sugar Loaves, Fiddler, and Dumping.

Jutting up out of Penobscot Bay, a dozen or so miles due east from Rockland and almost as far from other mainland points, North Haven and Vinalhaven Islands are ringed about by a thick spattering of islets and ledges. Only seven and a half miles long and not over five miles wide, Vinalhaven is so very irregular and cut up that at no point on the island can a person be more than three-quarters of a mile from salt water. North Haven, considerably smaller, is equally "chewed into" around her edge.

These two islands are like two sisters with the same background and family history and much the same appearance, yet as different in character as day is from night. North Haven is more polished and sophisticated, in a quiet, reticent way; Vinalhaven is more commercialized, more "up and coming."

In the early days before "folks from away" became the island's chief source of revenue, North Haveners went fishing to the Banks in their pinkies (the narrow-stern, small fishing vessels), or in the spring went south to the Virginia Capes for mackerel, working north with the catch until midsummer found them in the Baie de Chaleur or off Prince Edward Island. But for some unaccountable reason, after a few successful seasons, the mackerel dis-

## *More Islands of Penobscot Bay*

appeared and the bottom fell out of the fishing business. It was lucky for the island that about that time—in the 80's—the summer people put in an appearance; today they represent the island's principal industry.

North Haven village is now a quiet and unpretentious main street, lined by simple white houses, shops, and general stores. The interested will drive over the forty miles of improved road and will have pointed out to them the homes of the Lamonts, the Morrows, and others who make up the vacationers that the island attracts.

An auto ferry plies back and forth across the Thoro-fare, carrying motorists between the two islands. A much longer but more scenic route is to be found by threading your way through Leadbetter Narrows across Hurricane Sound and into Carver's Harbor, at the head of which is the village of Vinalhaven. On the way you pass Hurricane Island, today a place of ghosts. Like Dix Island, this was once a thriving village, shipping its beautiful pinkish-gray granite to every part of the country.

Vinalhaven is a busy fishing town and a less elaborate summer resort. At the end of the business section up at Monument Square, near the library and the church, is a curious-looking vehicle that brings a poignant sense of the past to the old-timers. They remember when huge granite blocks were hung under the high rear wheels and four to six horses were harnessed to the wagon. Everyone stood back when the rig came down the road on the way from the quarry to the vessel waiting for its cargo. A "galamander," the wagon was called, a relic of the days when Vinalhaven granite was shipped to every state in the Union

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for use in the bridges, monuments, and buildings of the nation.

Vinalhaven has its own poet, Harold Vinal, a descendant of one of the early settlers of the island. It was he who wrote in "Island Born":

My mother bore me in an island town,  
So I love windy water and the sight  
Of luggers sailing by in thick moonlight;—

My mother bore me in an island town—  
I wear the sea as others wear a crown.

Lying off Vinalhaven is a group of small islands known as the White Islands. When Martin Pring and the other early explorers sailed along the coast these islands were bare of vegetation and were really hills of light gray granite thrusting their summits above the sea—hence the name White Islands. Now most of them are wooded and the name is a misnomer.

One of the most interesting of the islands off Vinalhaven is Hurricane. Today a forlorn, bare-looking spot but once a thriving community said to have been in area the smallest incorporated town in the world, having been only about a mile long and slightly over a half mile wide.

Hurricane's prosperity rested on granite. The first quarries were started in 1870; skilled laborers and stonecutters were brought in, some from as far away as Italy. At the peak of the island's prosperity the population rose to around fifteen hundred. Roads were built, wharves were laid up, dwelling houses and boardinghouses—or "hotels" as they were called—sprang up almost overnight. The whole section mushroomed like a western mining town.

## More Islands of Penobscot Bay

When the granite business was booming, another enterprise, the Ocean Packing Company, for the canning of sea foods, was started.

Music and the theater flourished on the island, and at the height of prosperity there were several bands. One of the leading clarinetists in the world, R. Mont Arey, got his start on Hurricane. During the summer months traveling show troupes visited the island, putting on dramas and dispensing medicine on the side.

Granite was the popular building material of the time, and post offices, customhouses, libraries, bridges and mausoleums in many parts of the country were made of Hurricane granite. But in time granite was largely replaced by other building materials and today Hurricane is deserted—one of the loneliest spots along the coast.

In his beautiful narrative poem *Hurricane*, Harold Vinal has told the story of the island, beginning with the day it was sold by his great-grandfather for the sum of fifty dollars.

What a preposterous bargain, William Vinal,  
you made upon that blustering day in March,  
when for the solid sum of Fifty Dollars  
you sold your island to the granite breakers,—  
that dark, deep silver-girdled island, William.  
A pocketful of silver, Fifty Dollars,  
enough to pay your taxes for a year.  
That was a bargain with a meaning, Sire!

And so they came to *Hurricane*, Great-Grandfather,  
the blue-eyed Swedes, the forty dark Italians  
with weather-beaten wives and trooping children,  
and a mere handful of Americans. . . .

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Then on through the years of activity and prosperity until the end.

If you could see your island now, my Sire,  
you'd see it very nearly as it was  
before you struck that wild, preposterous bargain.  
The marble has turned back to sleep again,  
the hammers in the wind at last are silent.  
A white processional of ghostly children  
walk on the shore, tiptoe beneath the moon,  
their pinafores blown high, their pigtails streaming. . . .

How frail they built your township, *Hurricane*:  
a few nails and some boards to frame a house  
against the savage and encroaching weathers.  
The mouse is absent and the swallow gone;  
only the indefatigable spider  
is nimble with his business. What a pomp,  
so fierce to bloom, so quickly to be dust!

The Maine coast has always been a favorite haunt of the sailorman. A course through the Fox Islands Thoroughfare, across East Penobscot Bay and through Eggemoggin Reach, separating Deer Isle from the mainland, offers some of the finest sailing and most entrancing scenery along the entire Atlantic seaboard.

A dozen or so years back, when the much-beloved *J. T. Morse* was making its daily run from Rockland to Mount Desert, Stonington on Deer Isle was a regular port of call. Now the traveler lacking his own sloop or cruiser must take the overland route from Rockland to Sargentville—a matter of nearly a hundred miles—where a million-dollar suspension bridge takes him across the reach to Deer Isle. Up to 1939, when the bridge was opened, it cost the

## *More Islands of Penobscot Bay*

islanders, and everyone else, three dollars to make the round trip by ferry. The two principal settlements on the nine-mile-long island are Deer Isle Village, near the center where the distance across is barely a tall man's stride, and Stonington at the very tip end.

Stonington, the largest village on the island, has a bit of the flavor of an Old World town. Built squarely on a base of pink granite, it clings in a hit-or-miss fashion to the hillside and spread out below it like a huge front yard is the harbor with the gulls sailing and swooping overhead. Sometimes among the fishing boats that come and go about their business, an old-time two-masted coasting schooner slips into the harbor and drops anchor. It is pretty sure to be one of Captain Frank Swift's Down East windjammers sailing out of Camden to nowhere. For fifteen years these "dude cruises of the sea" have been showing tired city folks the joys of a voyage in sail.

Only a short distance offshore and at the very mouth of the harbor, a clutter of derricks looms up against the sky. Two quarries on Crotch Island are still in operation, turning out the handsome pink granite for which this section is famous. Every morning a hundred or more men are ferried across to their work in the quarries.

Many Deer Islanders still get their livelihood from the sea. Ralph K. Barter, a one-armed veteran of World War I, had until recently, when he disposed of part of his holdings, one of the largest lobster pounds along the coast, two ship chandleries, a fish and crabmeat cannery, a fleet of seine boats, to say nothing of an oil business, and an express route and running the island mail boats.

Because most Deer Isle boys learn to handle a boat al-

## *Islands of New England*

most before they get out of rompers, they grow up into excellent sailors. It is still a topic of conversation on the island that, in two of the international races, the victorious yachts *Defender* and *Columbia* were sailed by men from Deer Isle.

The eastern Penobscot Bay region has been called "The Land of Enchantment." No State-of-Mainer ever used such highfaluting language—it must have been someone "from away." But nowhere else along the Atlantic seaboard can you find more spots of beauty, more unspoiled and unchanged ways of living, than along this section of the coast. From Stonington harbor you look out over a clutter of boats with island after island stretching to the distance where Isle au Haut looms up on the horizon, looking just the same as when Champlain first saw and named it in 1604.

To reach Isle au Haut you climb into a small boat with freight, lumber, crates of milk and groceries for the island store. You go across the bay, out by McGlathery Island, Green Island, St. Helena with its gaunt abandoned derricks and huge blocks of granite standing stark and bare like a western ghost town. If it is low tide you climb into a dory and an island boy boats you ashore. Most of the island houses hug the shore around the little harbor, but the summer places are toward the eastern end, centering around the Point Lookout Club, a private club where occasionally outsiders are taken in. Much of the island is an undeveloped part of Acadia National Park, and is still wilderness.

Near the eastern shore of Isle au Haut is Turner Lake,



## *More Islands of Penobscot Bay*

a fresh-water pond lying not more than one hundred yards from salt water. If you're a good hiker you can walk to the lake along a beautiful woodsy road, but if you are lucky you might get a ride. Until his passing in 1952 Clyde Turner sometimes took visitors in a 1931 Ford once owned by Chief Justice Harlan Stone, a former much-beloved summer resident of the island. From Isle au Haut you can look across the four miles of water to Deer Isle and Blue Hill beyond, but, near as it seems, there is no telephone connection with the mainland. Close by Isle au Haut lies Merchant Island with its single white house, the home of Captain and Mrs. John Crowell. It is a lovely spot to live, but the Crowells spend little time in Maine as Captain Jack is in a United States Weather Bureau Station in Greenland, six hundred miles above the Arctic Circle and eight hundred miles from the North Pole.

Swan's Island and Frenchboro Long Island lie east of Deer Isle across Jericho Bay and do not appear on Government Chart 1203, "Penobscot Bay and Approaches." But a daily mail boat from Stonington makes a round trip to these islands and ties them to Penobscot Bay territory. A fairly regular service is also maintained from a Mount Desert port.

To reach these islands from Stonington, you take the Swan's Island boat after the mail truck gets in and arrive in time for noonday dinner on the island. If you love a crisp cool wind, even on the hottest day of summer, and the feel of spray against your cheeks, if you thrill to the sight of sea birds swooping across the crystal blue of the sky, if you like the romance of dozens of tiny islands with

## *Islands of New England*

only a desolate shack or two, or more likely bare and lonely since time began, then you'll be happy sailing across Jericho Bay into Burnt Coat Harbor, the main part of Swan's Island. Swan's is one of the largest islands of the bay, its four or five hundred inhabitants largely clustered in three small settlements—Swan's Island village, where you land, Minturn across the harbor, and Atlantic on the northern shore—all three connected by a good hard road. Of late years the island has become almost metropolitan, with its own lighting plant and telephone connection with the mainland.

"Burnt Coat," the name of the harbor and the light-house at its entrance, is a State-of-Maine corruption of Brûle-côte, the name which Champlain gave the island when he sailed by it in 1604. Unlike Fox Islands, named for the foxes, Swan's Island is not named for a swan but for James Swan, who bought the island in 1786 and had great ideas for its development. But his plans all went awry and for over twenty years Swan was an inmate of a debtor's prison in Paris, where he died in 1830.

Frenchboro, the village on Outer Long Island, is less than five miles from Swan's Island. It is a lonely spot, a horseshoe of houses dotted along a mile of road with a white church watching over the harbor. There are no summer people, no hotels, and no telephone, but some of the most magnificent scenery along the entire Maine coast. When you walk around the island, you follow trails that lead through the woods, with here and there an open spot from which you look across the water to the hills of Mount Desert in the distance.

## *More Islands of Penobscot Bay*

The Penobscot Bay area is old in history as Americans measure it. The first white men, the Norsemen, sailed these waters shortly after the year 1000, but not until five hundred years later is there a record of further explorations by the English, the French, and the Spanish.

Among the most colorful names associated with this region is that of Jean-Vincent d'Abbadie, Baron de St. Castin. The young French nobleman came to the eastern shores of the bay around 1670 to investigate a land grant. He must have liked what he found, for he stayed on, built a house of logs and stone, and courted and married an Indian maiden, the daughter of a chief of the Penobscots. The lovely village of Castine is named for the young Baron.

It was off the shores of this town that the largest naval engagement of the Revolution—and one of the most disastrous for the Americans—was fought in 1779. Over a thousand men under Lovell, Saltonstall, and Lieutenant Colonel Paul Revere made up the Penobscot Expedition, sent to drive out the British from Fort George at Pentagoet, as Castine was still called. But bickering broke out among the leaders and the entire fleet was trapped by the British in Penobscot Bay. Every American ship was lost and most of the men that escaped had to walk back to Boston. They still point out the bullet holes in an ancient house across the bay at Pripet, at the upper end of Long Island, known more often as Islesboro. This long narrow island lies only three miles offshore from Lincolnville Beach on Route 1. Ten miles in length, in places it measures two miles in width. However, at its waist, the

## *Islands of New England*

sea has gnawed its east and west coves until they are separated by only about three rods of marsh.

Islesboro has become a day-tripper's attraction only recently—since the car ferry was opened from Lincolnville. The fifty-odd miles of road start where the ferry lands at the Sailor Memorial, formerly the Grindle Point lighthouse, and run to Turtle Head, the most northern point, then back on the eastern side to Dark Harbor. For over half a century, the aristocracy of the country spent the summer months at Dark Harbor, where the social life centers about the Inn and the Tarratine Yacht Club at Western Jetty. More than one "new rich," well-heeled with dollars but lacking in social background, has tried to crash this society. Usually they have taken their millions to less exacting resorts. Today Dark Harbor is a little worn at the seams and slightly threadbare. Several mansions—showplaces of the island—are in the hands of wreckers. The islanders don't like the idea of losing the taxes.

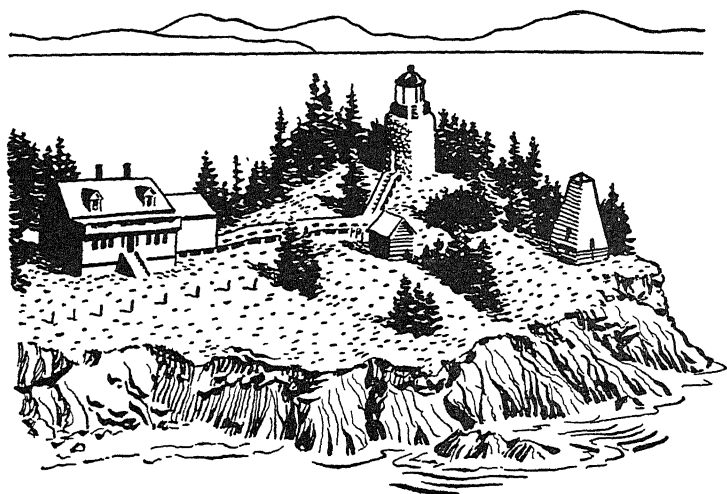
The salt air and the green rocky islands of the Maine coast, deeply indented by bays and rivers, have always seemed to make State-of-Mainers, especially island people, a little bit different. "Character," their friends call it; others say it's "cussedness." There was the preacher on Islesboro who was asked to hold a meeting to pray for rain. "Damned poor time to pray for rain with the wind in the no'thwest," was his comment.

Captain Phineas Leslie Rolerson of Dark Harbor was, until his illness and death a few years back, the local custodian of the Yacht Club. P. L. called all the ladies "Toots" and greeted them, on their return in the summer,

## *More Islands of Penobscot Bay*

with a big smack on the cheek. When P. L. dressed up, he always wore in his breast pocket a dainty handkerchief, dropped one day in the clubhouse by Lady Nancy Astor. P. L.'s portrait, painted by Charles Dana Gibson, for many years a summer resident of nearby Seven Hundred Acre Island, hangs now in the Sailor Memorial. Another Rolerson, a son of P. L., carries on at the Yacht Club and likes to tell of the day when he fed fried flounder from his lunchbox to Mrs. Anthony Eden.

Captain Greenleaf of the Swan's Island mail boat has a story of the old lady on Frenchboro who died years ago during an especially rugged spell of weather, when for days boats couldn't leave the island. "There was no earthly way to get a casket in the dead of winter," said the captain, "so some of the neighbors found a schooner's old foresail, made a double reef in it, and put the old lady inside. At the funeral a youngster, the old lady's grandson, went off into fits of laughter. After the funeral, they asked him why he did such a thing. The boy replied, 'All I could think of was Gram scudding through Hell in a double-reefed fores'l.' "



## X I

# From Friendship to Owls Head

ONE OF THE most delightful stretches of Maine coast is the area extending from Friendship through the Muscle Ridge Channel. The shores are bold and wooded and most of the islands are uninhabited, except for a few weeks in summer when fishermen move their gear offshore and set up camp for the season.

The town of Friendship consists of the mainland area and several nearby islands. From a brief history of the town, *Chronicles of Cushing and Friendship*, published sixty years ago, the following is quoted:

Friendship was a part of Waldo Patent and original deeds are from General Waldo. The Indian and plantation name of the town was Meduncook and it was first settled in 1750. About this date a fort was erected on an island in

## *From Friendship to Owls Head*

the southern part of the town which has since been known as Garrison Island. It is connected with the main at low water. James Bradford was one of the first inhabitants and he settled near the fort. In 1754 twenty-two families resided here. Among these early settlers may be mentioned the names of Jameson, Cook, Morton, Bickmore, Wadsworth, Davis, Lawry, Gay, Cushing, Bartlett and Demorse. In the war of 1755 all moved with their families within the garrison, except Bradford who believed himself safe, having sometime previous rendered valuable assistance to the chief in which the life of the latter was in danger while crossing the river which was frozen over. One morning, however, the people within the fort saw Indians approaching and fired their guns to warn Bradford. It is said he did not hear the alarm. The Indians killed Bradford and his wife; their daughter twelve or fourteen years of age hid under the bed with an infant. After the Indians had gone some distance from the cabin the young girl, with the infant in her arms, started for the fort. The Indians saw her and gave chase. As she neared the garrison, tomahawks were thrown at her, one of which struck her in the side making an ugly wound. She bravely held on to the infant and reached the fort where her injury was carefully attended to. She recovered and lived to a ripe old age, after having brought up a large family.

The last notable attack of the Indians upon the settlements of Maine was in the fall of 1758 when the fort on Garrison Island was attacked by the savages who captured eight men but failed to take the stronghold. The Abenaki, Etechemin and Milmak have ever since been peaceful subjects.

Today Garrison Island is a tranquil spot where a new house has recently been built by people who are in the business of buying sea moss. Friendship Island, three miles in length, is only a short distance from the Friendship

## *Islands of New England*

Lobster Pound. Formerly seven or eight hundred people lived there, but now there are only a few year-round residents and several summer places. Fifty years or so ago a thriving granite business was in operation on this island; over a hundred men were employed and stone was quarried for many important monumental jobs, including the Triumphal Arch at the entrance to Prospect Park in Brooklyn and Grant's Tomb in New York.

An interesting rumor, entirely unconfirmed, has it that Morse Island was, in the early days, the site of a French missionary trading post and that its name, Morse, and the well-known family name, Morse, common in this part of the state, are derived from the name of an early trader on the island, Demorse.

Another small island in this area is Moody, or as the chart calls it, Crotch Island, where a boys' camp is in session every summer.

If you have read Elisabeth Ogilvie's delightful book *My World Is an Island*, you will recall how Miss Ogilvie gave up her beloved Ragged Island or Criehaven (the Bennett's Island of her novels) to live on an island nearer shore and more accessible in the winter. The spot where the author now lives is Gay Island, only a short distance across the water from Pleasant Point in the village of Cushing. If you should happen to be standing on the bank, looking across at Gay Island, you might see two girls in blue jeans come down from the yellow house, hop into a dory, and start rowing across to the dock. It would probably be Elisabeth and her friend Dot, coming over to the "main" for groceries.

The Georges Islands at the mouth of the St. George



## *From Friendship to Owls Head*

River probably look much the same as they did in 1605 when Captain George Weymouth first saw them, their shores bold and rocky and heavily wooded. In March of that year Captain Weymouth in his ship the *Archangel* sailed down the Thames on one of the most important trips of exploration of that time. About two months later the vessel landed on the eastern shore of Allen Island in a safe little inlet, which they named Pentecost Harbor. On the bank overlooking this harbor, Weymouth erected a stone cross. Two years later another vessel, the *Gift of God*, under the command of George Popham, landed at this same spot and held the first English church service in what is now the State of Maine. Today a stone cross stands on the spot where it is supposed that George Weymouth erected that first cross over three centuries ago. This present memorial was placed on the island in 1905, to commemorate the tercentenary of Weymouth's landing.

While Weymouth and his men were enjoying the lovely spring days, reveling in the fish and lobsters which they caught and gorging themselves on the wild strawberries which grew so abundantly along the banks, a band of Indians approached. At first they were shy and unfriendly but, after being shown the brightly colored beads, knives, and trinkets which the men had brought, they came nearer and gathered around. Of all the things that amazed them, one of the most startling was to watch James Rosier, the scribe of the expedition, writing in the ship's ledger, but to impress them even more Weymouth rubbed his sword over a magnet and with it moved a knife and picked up a needle.

After thus winning the Indians' friendship, Weymouth

## *Islands of New England*

did what seems a dastardly act—he seized several of the young men and took them to England, exhibiting them much as a circus man would exhibit freaks and strange animals. This kidnaping doubtless was one of the causes of the later conflicts in Maine, as the Indians were greatly incensed at Weymouth's treachery. But the presence on London streets of these strange redmen served to attract the attention of several colonizers, particularly Sir Ferdinando Gorges, and probably did much to interest men in the settlement of New England.

Burnt Island, just across a narrow channel from Allen Island, is the site of a Coast Guard station, its white buildings standing out against the green of the spruces.

Nearer inshore are several other islands, some uninhabited and several occupied only during the summer months. McGee Island has been for many years the summer residence of the Erickson family, whose sons have conducted a successful salt business in the Bahamas. One of the early Ericksons was the inventor of the submarine. Teel Island, a small island nearer Port Clyde, is owned by Henry Teel and his sister, Rose Teel Atkins. This little island has been in the Teel family for many generations, it having been a grant to Adam Teel by the English king, George the Second. Henry Teel, a man in his seventies, still handles a good-sized string of lobster traps. Hooper Island, with three houses occupied only a part of the year, was originally called Hupper Island, the Hupper family being natives of the Channel Isles. A tiny dot of land, Blubber Island, is so named because in the early days there were great iron pots on the island where whale oil was extracted from the blubber.

## *From Friendship to Owls Head*

A few miles east lies Metinic Island, bare and lonely. Once wooded, now only a few straggly trees remain, and the island is almost deserted except for a few lobstermen who set their traps around the shore during the summer months. One house still standing dates back to 1814. It was while this house was being built that the naval battle between H.M.S. *Boxer* and U.S.S. *Enterprise* took place near Monhegan, and Metinic people watched anxiously from the framework of the house.

On the chart it is spelled "Muscle Ridge Channel," though critics are scornful and say, "Of course, it should be Mussel Ridge Channel." But Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* says: "*Mussel*. Also *muscle*. Any of certain marine bivalve mollusks." So either is correct.

The western approach to Penobscot Bay is by the narrow entrance at Whitehead and on through the Muscle Ridge Channel. The many small islands that dot this area are for the most part uninhabited, except for an occasional lobsterman who camps here during the summer months. You would hardly expect a boom town on any of these desolate islands, but for a few years, during the latter half of the nineteenth century, Dix Island in the Muscle Ridges was a real boom town, its prosperity based on granite instead of gold and its population rising from zero to a couple of thousands.

In the 1850's, a New York millionaire took Dix Island in payment for a bad debt. He tried to devise some scheme for getting his money back, but didn't have much luck. It wasn't until after his death, during the free-spending period following the Civil War, that the sixty-five-acre

## *Islands of New England*

island really began to pay off. Great public buildings were being built that would "stand forever," and granite was the demanded material. Heirs of the New York millionaire and others investors formed the Dix Island Granite Company and started operations, opening up eight quarries and signing government contracts for the Charleston Custom House, the New York Post Office, the Philadelphia Post Office, and others.

Experienced quarrymen were brought from Ireland, Scotland, and Italy and a town was built to take care of them. They even had a theater with a seating capacity of several hundred. The island was a bedlam of noise: the clatter of hundreds of hammers against the stone, the thunderous roar of blasting, the shouting of the teamsters to the oxen. The only quiet came on week ends when the workers all went into Rockland to "do the town" and enjoy the pleasures of Sea Street.

Today the population is back again to zero, except for a month or two in summer when fishermen bring their families for an outing. The buildings have burned or been taken down—only the cellar holes remain. Gulls still fly gracefully over the island and the tide ebbs and flows against the shore.

Monroe Island, just outside Owls Head, at the eastern end of the channel is heavily wooded and uninhabited. A beautiful sight on a bright summer morning as you sail by it on the way to Matinicus! Near Monroe is the Navy's Test Course for determining the official speed of United States Navy vessels.



## X I I

# Monhegan

THERE ARE LEGENDS dating back to the sixth century concerning Irish, Welsh, and, later, Nordic and Latin voyages to the New World. Many of them mention a small island, remote from the mainland, which was their first sight of land after a long and arduous journey. That island was Monhegan. Because of its prominence in the founding of the New World, and in early American history, Monhegan is the best known of Maine's remote offshore islands.

It lies nine miles straight out to sea from Port Clyde, a small fishing village near the tip of one of the numerous peninsulas along the coast. Years ago Monhegan had no regular connection with the mainland, and mail for the island would accumulate at Port Clyde—or Herring Gut as it was formerly called—until some fishing boat put in-

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shore for supplies and would take the mail along as an accommodation to the islanders. Now, during the busy summer season, the Monhegan-Port Clyde mail boat makes two round trips daily, reducing its service to one trip daily during the spring and fall and three trips a week during the winter months.

No wonder this rocky island, far out to sea, has been a sailor's landmark since the days when the Indians sailed their frail canoes along the coast, hunting the sea fowl or gathering their eggs. Comparatively low on the mainland side, Monhegan slopes upward to high cliffs on the ocean side with a sheer drop of well over a hundred feet to the water beneath. The island looms up like a New World Gibraltar, visible on a clear day from a distance of many miles.

To read the beginning history of Maine, you might well imagine that in the early 1600's this part of the coast had plenty of visitors. In 1603, the year of Queen Elizabeth's death, Captain Martin Pring sailed along the shores and probably dropped anchor in Monhegan Harbor. Two years later came Captain George Weymouth in his ship the *Archangel*, but records do not agree as to whether he landed on the island. That same year, the Frenchman Samuel de Champlain sailed by the island and called it "La Nef," for at a distance it looked like a ship. In her book *Monhegan, The Cradle of New England*, Ida Sedgwick Proper has offered extensive evidence to show that Monhegan was really the island on which a cross was planted and the first English religious service in New England held. Henry S. Burrage, D.D., former State Historian of

## *Monhegan*

Maine, is only one of several distinguished authorities who have disagreed with this opinion.

In 1611 Captain Edward Harlow visited Monhegan and captured two natives, whom he took to England. But it was Captain John Smith—the same John Smith who was so closely associated with Virginia's early history—who described Monhegan so aptly as "a high round Ile" and who today is commemorated by a bronze tablet on a great boulder near the village schoolhouse. The inscription reads:

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH  
ADVENTURER IN MANY OLD WORLD COUNTRIES  
A PIONEER IN THE NEW WORLD  
GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA  
CAME HERE WITH TWO VESSELS IN 1614  
ANCHORED IN THIS ISLAND HARBOR  
AND EXPLORED THE COAST FROM PENOBSCOT BAY TO CAPE COD  
DISCOVERING A LARGE OPPORTUNITY  
FOR ADDING TO ENGLAND'S GLORY BY COLONIZATION  
HE RETURNED HOME AND SPENT HIS REMAINING YEARS  
IN ADVANCING AMERICAN ENTERPRISES  
BECAUSE OF HIS GREAT INTEREST IN THE FUTURE OF AMERICA  
AND TO COMMEMORATE HIS CONNECTION WITH THIS ISLAND  
THIS TERCENTENARY TABLET IS PLACED  
BY MONHEGAN RESIDENTS  
1914

Predicting what kind of trip a visitor may have in going from Port Clyde to Monhegan is like trying to forecast Maine weather. It just can't be done. Perhaps it is one of those perfect summer days, when the sky is azure-blue and the water sparkles in the sunlight while puffs of white spray break against the gray ledges and the green

## *Islands of New England*

wooded slopes of the distant islands stand out against the luminous sky. To sit high near the bow of the boat and feel the salt spray spatter your cheeks as you speed toward the gray blur which is Monhegan—that is the perfect trip. But it may be a stormy, gray day with an easterly wind and a heavy chop. The white surf charges the dripping ledges as the boat plunges and strains to move ahead. Only a good sailor enjoys this trip! Then sometimes it's "thick o' fog," and the sea is as calm as glass. The world seems deserted, empty except for the surge and wash of water against the boat. The islands and ledges are hidden, and off in the distance is the muted clang of a bell buoy. Finally the boat slips into the little harbor, by Smutty-nose, a ledge almost covered with kelp. At the right is Manana, a small, precipitous island on which the foghorn is blowing.

Monhegan is a small island to have made such a name for itself in the early days of America. Only about one and a half miles long and a mile wide, it rises to a height of one hundred and sixty feet. The village lies on the sheltered lower side, facing the harbor. The road starts at the boat landing, going up the hill for a few feet, then branching to the right and left where it becomes Monhegan's Main Street. Some houses stand close to the road; others have gardens with picket fences around them. On one building, a sign warns you against feeding or petting the sheep! The street is rough and narrow and winds in and out in unexpected ways, finally petering out in footpaths. Between the buildings, lobster traps are piled high, and gaily colored buoys hang from the fish houses, all ready for Trap Day. Monhegan, unlike other Maine coastal com-



## *Monhegan*

munities, has a closed season on lobster fishing. From June 25th until January it is illegal to set traps within two miles of the island's shores. This means that during the tourist months lobsters served on Monhegan are brought from the mainland. "We figure we do better this way," the fisherman tells you. "We don't get 'shedders' from January through June and we get better prices for our lobsters when we do haul." "Shedders" are lobsters which have discarded their old shells and are growing new ones.

The road to the left passes the post office, gift shops, and a Memorial Library given in memory of "Jackie and Edward," two little children who were drowned while playing along the shore. Just beyond is the schoolhouse, with its high windows from which the boys and girls can steal time from their lessons to look over toward Manana and the sea beyond. Going up the hill still further, the road passes the house and studio of Andrew Winter, one of Monhegan's most distinguished artists. The climb to the lighthouse is a stiff one, up a rugged path where old fish-nets have been spread to make the climbing easier, perhaps, or to keep the road from washing out. From this point the pathway leads through the woods to White Head. From the grassy summit the world seems spread out before you. Far below the surf breaks over the shiny brown kelp, and the cliffs show every gradation of grays and browns and even a deep yellow—due, it is said, to a type of lichen found in very few places along the coast. The only sign of life, as you stand there, is the everlasting circling of the gulls and, far off toward the horizon, a fishing boat heading into Port Clyde, with its load of her-ring for the sardine factory.

## *Islands of New England*

The road to the right, through the village, passes near a huge square house, old and weather-beaten—the Trefethen house, the Influence, built in 1826. Just beyond are the village church, two small hotels and a straggling of houses, and then the road becomes a path which ends at Lobster Cove. On the gentle slope leading down to the water are great mats of savin, a type of juniper with dark foliage and silvery green berries, called locally “the trailing yew.”

From the porch of Monhegan’s largest hotel, the Island Inn, situated near the harbor, you look directly across at Manana—high, rounded, grass-covered, and somehow reminiscent of an island off the Scottish coast. For years interest has been centered on this little island, because of curious marks, thought by many authorities to be of Norse origin, on a boulder.

Unlike some of the other outer islands off the Maine coast, Monhegan really seems to welcome summer folks. The island’s year-round population is well under a hundred, but in July and August the number climbs to several times that figure, and for plenty of people “summer business” is the principal means of livelihood.

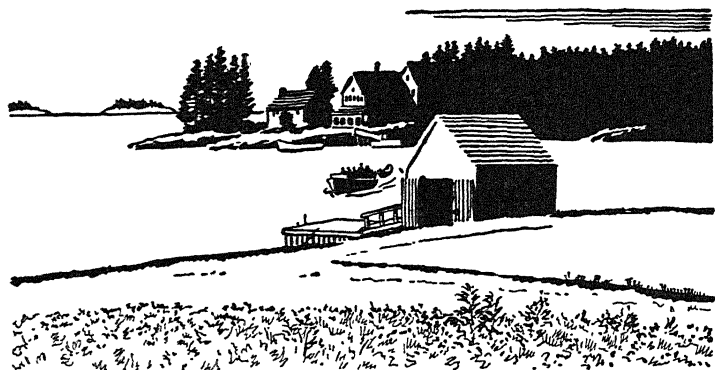
You can see artists in all directions, men and women working away at easels, trying to get on canvas some of the beauty and picturesqueness that are Monhegan. Everywhere you go, there are flowers—from the first wild flowers of spring through the deep purple asters of late fall. The village gardens are a mass of old-fashioned bloom, gorgeous and vivid in coloring, as island flowers always seem to be. There is a delightful custom on Monhegan of giving to departing visitors a nosegay of bright flowers.

## Monhegan

Especially popular guests may have their "fronts" covered with bouquets, and even the men have posies in their buttonholes.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was a small boy living in Portland when in the summer of 1813 the United States brig *Enterprise*, commanded by young William Burrows, met and captured near Monhegan the British brig *Boxer*, under the command of Captain Samuel Blyth. In mid-afternoon the two vessels opened fire and the furious battle could be plainly heard along the Portland waterfront. At last the British gave up, and the sword of their dead commander was placed in the hands of the dying Captain Burrows. Their bodies were taken to Portland and buried side by side in the old Eastern Cemetery looking out across the bay. Years later Longfellow incorporated this incident in his poem, "My Lost Youth":

I remember the sea-fight far away,  
How it thundered o'er the tide!  
And the dead captains, as they lay  
In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil bay  
Where they in battle died.



### X I I I

## Islands of Muscongus Bay

IN W. D. Williamson's *History of the State of Maine*, we read: "The southerly Island in Broadbay toward the western shore is Muscongus Island, of more than 900 acres, inhabited by 8 or 10 families, and beautified with several fine farms. It has upon it a convenient schoolhouse." This was written in 1832. Now, over a hundred years later, the island is much the same—possibly a few more families during the summer months—but alas! no fine farms. Even now called Muscongus on the government charts, the island is more often spoken of today as Loud's Island, named for an early settler, and the tiny settlement is often referred to as Loudville.

Lying about a mile offshore from Round Pond, a little fishing village in the town of Bristol, Loud's Island has a history that goes way back! Here was the home of Samoset, the famous Pemaquid sagamore—the same Samoset who appeared before the Pilgrims at Plymouth, greeting

## *Islands of Muscongus Bay*

them with the words, "Welcome, Englishmen." In 1625, Samoset, with another chief, Unnongoit, is said to have sold a large tract of land, comprising present-day Bristol and Damariscotta, to a trader named John Brown. This has been referred to as the first deed of land ever executed in New England, but people who have made a study of the papers contend that the deed was actually a forgery.

Tradition has it that an Indian cemetery is located at the north end of the island and that here Samoset lies buried. Hunt as you will, you can't find it, though, for the stones used on the graves were long ago carted off for house foundations and the whole area roundabout is grown up thickly with underbrush.

The best way to get to Loud's Island is to drive down to the town wharf at Round Pond. You may have to hang around for a while but eventually someone will show up.

"Any chance of getting over to Loud's Island?" you ask.

The answer is usually, "Yes. So-and-so may be up to the store, or he may even have gone to 'Scotty' (Damariscotta, ten miles away) but if you wait 'round for a while, he'll be back, and you can go over with him."

To be truthful, there really isn't too much reason for going over unless you like to see places where time has stood still. Straight across to the island as the gull flies is less than a mile, but the landward side toward Round Pond is uninhabited, most of the houses being on the ocean side, bordering a little harbor protected at the eastward by nearby Marsh Island. Standing up in an open boat with the wind whipping against your cheeks, the white clouds scudding across the turquoise sky, and the waves breaking against the bow in white spray—all this is reason enough

## *Islands of New England*

for a trip to the island. Rounding the spruce-clad point, you head into the harbor and to the dock, then climb the path that winds over the island. Straight ahead is the little post office—no big pretentious building this, but a room in a cottage home. Unlike many of the Maine islands Loud's has no village settlement, only a schoolhouse, a store, and a few houses scattered along the rutty road.

The Loudville church has had a varied history. Years ago when the community at Malaga Island near New Meadows was dispersed by the state, Alexander MacDonald, then head of the Maine Sea Coast Mission, got permission to remove the schoolhouse. In two days, the building was taken down, the hardware and even the nails and screws being saved, and the whole works loaded on the schooner *Abdon Keene* and boated to Loud's Island. Here, the story runs, Nathan Carter with his ox, Cal Prior with his horse, Ed Osier with his steers, Ed Carter with Mr. Benson's blind horse—all hands turned to and hauled the wrecked schoolhouse to the church site, where it was erected into a trim little building, with an apartment for the minister.

Loud's Island has had an interesting political history. It seems that, by an oversight, an early government survey omitted a mention of the island, and for many years the citizens had no voting privileges. At the time of Lincoln's election, however, the islanders did cast their votes. For a certain state office, the results were very close in the county. The Republicans of Bristol threw out the Loud's islanders' votes, saying that the residents were not eligible to vote. This tipped the scales of the election results and the Republican candidate won. The indignant islanders

## *Islands of Muscongus Bay*

consulted lawyers and, on their advice, informed the Bristol town authorities that they had seceded. "We are willing to support the United States," they said, "but not the town of Bristol."

Under the laws of the State of Maine, Loud's Island is now considered unorganized territory. The residents obtain certificates from the state assessor, to whom they pay taxes. Poll taxes are paid to Bristol, and the citizens may vote in state and national elections by coming to the mainland or by absentee ballot.

The church at Loud's Island has always played a vital part in the community life of the island. In recent years the Reverend Gertrude Anderson, a former missionary in Burma, has been the minister and at times has doubled as teacher of the island school. Here at the church the Sea Coast Mission shows movies, and here the people come, not only to church services, but to suppers, sales, and socials.

Not far from Loud's Island in Muscongus Bay lies a heavily wooded island of about three hundred and thirty acres—an island green with pine, spruce, and balsam, and with white birch trees scattered here and there. This beautiful island, lying fairly close to the shore, might have been used in the early days for the pasturing of farm animals. At least that makes a reasonable explanation of its name—Hog Island.

One of the deplorable sights in cruising along the Maine coast is the large number of devastated woodland areas on both mainland shores and islands. Here the demand for pulpwood has led the woodchoppers to cut indiscriminately, leaving dangerous and unsightly slash that constitutes a tremendous fire hazard and leaves the woods a

## *Islands of New England*

shambles. Had it not been for the farsightedness of two women, the beauties of Hog Island might have been destroyed as they have been on so many other lovely islands.

The story of Hog Island goes back nearly 50 years. An Amherst professor, David Todd, and his wife, Mabel Loomis Todd, saw this little island when cruising along the Maine coast, and it was love at first sight. For many years they came here every summer for their vacation. In time Mrs. Todd acquired title to a large portion of the island and, after her death in 1932, Dr. Millicent Todd Bingham, with the aid of Dr. James M. Todd, purchased the remainder of the island and established the Todd Wild Life Sanctuary in memory of Mrs. Bingham's mother.

On a thirty-acre peninsula jutting from the northeast side of Hog Island is located the headquarters of the Audubon Camp of Maine for adults, conducted each summer by the National Audubon Society. In their brochure it states: "A camp where *Teachers, Youth Leaders, Camp Counselors*, and other adults with a hobby or professional interest in nature and conservation participate in field trips which demonstrate the best methods of good teaching and group leadership—observe living plants and animals in a variety of natural habitats—receive practical program aids—learn how wiser use of our natural resources contributes to human welfare."

On alternate Friday mornings from the middle of June to the latter part of August, groups of men and women, young and old, stand about on Main Street in Damariscotta. They have reached town the night before by bus or train or car and are waiting for the Audubon Camp



## *Islands of Muscongus Bay*

bus to take them to the boat landing at Medomak, from which point they are ferried across to the island. Five two-week sessions are held each summer, with approximately fifty students from every part of the United States and Canada for each session.

Except for the area around the camp buildings, the whole island is in its native state, the only paths are those made by the feet of the students or by the deer that live in the dense thickets, deep in the island. Not far from the water is an osprey's nest. Ospreys, or fish hawks, build nests that really last, since from year to year, they return to the same nests to rear their young. The osprey nest on Hog Island is at the top of a spruce tree. It's a large affair, rough and untidy looking, with twigs and sticks protruding from all sides. From time to time, if you watch quietly, you will see the great bird swoop down out of the sky and alight on the rim of the nest.

One of the most delightful bird books in print is a small book written by Helen Gere Cruickshank, entitled *Bird Islands Down East*. Mrs. Cruickshank with her husband, Allan D. Cruickshank, the well-known bird photographer, spend several weeks each summer at Audubon Camp on Hog Island.

But the study of birds is only one part of the program at Audubon. Natives around Bremen and Medomak aren't a bit surprised to see dignified-looking men and women racing about the countryside brandishing long butterfly nets, wading into the water where some shallow-water forms of life are to be seen in action, or crawling around the ground, identifying rocks and mosses.

From all this at least a few people are gaining a new

## *Islands of New England*

point of view toward conservation. They are being taught the complex interdependence of all forms of life, animal and vegetable, and are learning that one form of wild life should not be exterminated at the expense of others, at least not without first knowing fully the consequences.

Bremen Long Island, a short distance up the Medomak River from Hog Island, was formerly a prosperous farming community. Now its inhabitants are mainly summer folks who leave on Labor Day week end.

Only a mile or two east of Loud's Island in Muscongus Bay lies Harbor Island with its solitary stone house. During the Revolution, when Samuel McCobb, who had built the house, was a soldier in the Continental Army, an English cruiser anchored off the island and landed several sailors in search of plunder. But Mistress McCobb was too much for them. Seizing a bean pole she charged at the invaders and drove them off the island.

One of the most attractive small islands in the bay is Otter Island, now privately owned by people who wish to preserve it in its natural state. This island is a favorite nesting place of the magnificent great blue herons which one sees occasionally posing on the shores of some bay island or in the waters of a tidal river.



## X I V

### Island Cooks

[N SUMMER a Maine lobsterman starts his day early, and before the sun is up he is on his way to the shore. Hauling a string of a hundred and fifty or so traps takes plenty of strength and endurance, and a good breakfast is needed before starting out. Bacon and eggs are always something to fall back on, or a good slab of fried ham, but he much prefers to sit down in front of a plate of fried haddock and potatoes or a big bowl of fish chowder "het up" from the night before—with a big plate of hot biscuits and loughnuts, of course, and plenty of hot coffee to wash them down.

Epicures may extol the merits of highly seasoned bouillabaisse with its conglomeration of ingredients, but an islander likes his fish chowder straight, with the flavor of haddock fresh from the sea and pointed up by a touch

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of onion. Haddock—or cod as a second choice—salt pork, potatoes, a sliced onion or two, salt, pepper, and milk are the sole ingredients in a fish chowder. "You want old potatoes, if you can get them—and slice them slitherin'." You know, one edge thick and one edge thin—they cook up better," the island cook will tell you. "Clam chowder? You make it just the same, only don't overcook your clams."

To mention tomatoes in clam chowder is almost a criminal offense in Maine. At least, not long ago, a Down East legislator tried to introduce a bill in Augusta making it "against the law" to add tomatoes to clam chowder. It really was foolish to introduce such a bill—only "folks from away" would ever dream of doing such an outlandish thing.

In a world of ready-prepared cereals, store-bread toast, and bakery doughnuts, the breakfasts that Helen served her boarders on Matinicus were something to remember.

The preparations began the night before—starting the rolled oats on the back of the range and boiling and shelling out a couple of lobsters. In the morning even the late sleeper appeared right on the dot of eight. First, a bowl of oatmeal, cooked as it should be, slowly and overnight, with a pitcher of Jersey cream to pour over it. Then, scrambled eggs, creamy and soft and flecked through with chunks of lobster, blueberry muffins so light that they fairly floated from the stove to the table, and fresh country butter and wild strawberry jam as a spread. And plenty of hot coffee, made the old-fashioned way with a crushed egg shell to clear it.

## *Island Cooks*

It has always been said that the colder the water, the better the lobster. That must explain why State-of-Maine lobsters are tops. On Maine's offshore islands they have a favorite way of cooking lobsters. The tails of the lobsters, just out of the ocean, are broken off, then, with a sharp-pointed knife, the chunks of meat are carefully extracted from each tail. Dipped in beaten egg, lightly seasoned with salt and pepper, these morsels of raw lobster are sautéed in butter for only a few minutes.

For a special company dinner, this fried lobster is served with tiny new potatoes cooked with new peas, an hour or two from the garden, hot "raised" rolls, and a bowl of lobster salad made from the claw meat. Date custard pie is a favorite dessert to top off with.

There's no "right" season of the year for a lobster stew. Any time when you're lucky enough to have the lobsters will do. On an island it can be almost any day when the man of the house has been out hauling. The youngster may say, "Oh, Mom, why don't you make a lobster stew for supper?" And that is just what she does.

She shells out a couple or more lobsters. It depends on the size of the family, as well as the size of their appetites, how many she uses, but a State-of-Maine lobster stew has plenty of lobster, something like 80 per cent lobster and 20 per cent milk. She doesn't scrimp on the lobster.

She sautés the desired amount of lobster meat—plus the green tomalley—in plenty of butter in a hot skillet and, at the same time, has rich milk heating in a double boiler. When the milk is hot and the lobster has heated only a very few minutes, she dumps the lobster into the milk, being sure to rinse out the saucepan with a bit of hot milk

## *Islands of New England*

to get all the flavor and color. Next she seasons very delicately with a dash of salt and pepper and adds plenty of butter. And, to make it super, she pours in a little cream, then lets the whole thing stand for a few minutes—even for an hour or two—to ripen.

Island people are picnic-minded. The season is short but they really make the most of it while it lasts. The best time for a picnic is when the mackerel are schooling and the "tinkers" are only a matter of minutes from the ocean to the big iron spider on the driftwood fire near the shore. Right beside it the lobsters are cooking in a kettle of sea water, and nearby the battered old coffee pot is sending out its heavenly aroma.

Crisp sweet mackerel that you eat in your fingers with curls of bacon to accent the flavor—lobster drenched in butter—hot biscuits or homemade bread still warm from the oven—and fresh raspberry or blueberry pie to end up with. A common picnic dessert on some of Maine's outermost islands is "Joe Bunkers"—delectable little turnovers stuffed with a chopped raisin, lemon filling.

An island cook follows the berries from June, when the fields are red with wild strawberries and their fragrance fills the air, till late in the fall, when the sumac bushes along the walls are showing their autumn colors, and the cranberries are ripening off.

Wild-strawberry shortcake, with cream so thick it needs no whipping—fresh raspberry pie and fresh blueberry pie or blueberry duff—blackberries, to turn into jam or to eat, crushed and sugared, with hot biscuits—and, to point up the Thanksgiving dinner, ruby-red sauce made from

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the cranberries gathered on the surf-washed slopes of Southern Point.

On Green Island, not far from the Muscle Ridge Channel, lobstermen camp every summer in shacks and set their traps along the shore. An unusual kind of baked lobster is one of the specialties of this island. Take as many one-and-a-half- or two-pound lobsters as you have people to eat them. Place lobsters on backs and with a sharp knife split them open, removing stomach and back veins, but leaving all fat, tomalley, and juice. Then take three to five scallops (depending on size) for each lobster, cut in smaller pieces, and sauté lightly in butter. Mix with a small amount of buttered crumbs and season with salt and pepper. Fill the lobster cavities as full as possible and dot with butter. Sprinkle with crumbs. Bake in a hot oven about eighteen minutes and serve at once.

On Swan's Island there used to be a house where they put up drummers, many of whom planned their island trips to insure a couple of days' stay at this little inn, which was really just a fair-sized house. The accommodations were of the simplest, but the lady who ran the place was known to set a good table. One dessert that her guests always called for was blueberry duff. This is the way she made it. She sifted together two cups flour, one-fourth cup sugar, one-half teaspoon salt, and two teaspoons baking powder, reserving a part of this mixture to flour one cup blueberries. She stirred into the flour one-half cup milk, mixed lightly, and folded in blueberries. This was steamed for at least one hour and served with lemon sauce.

Sometimes there comes a spell of weather on the coast

## *Islands of New England*

when it's "thick o' fog" for a week or two, or a rugged no'theaster's been blowing for days. There's no chance to get fresh fish or meat, and the family are fed up with canned stuff. "I guess we'd better have a salt-fish dinner this noon," the housewife says, "and fish hash for supper. I might even make a whipped-cream cake, seeing it's kind of gloomy outside."

The salt fish is cut in serving pieces, freshened in cold water for two or three hours, then drained, covered with cold water and brought to a boil, then drained again. Fat salt pork is diced and fried until golden brown, but never the least bit burned. Small beets and potatoes are cooked until tender. White sauce—called by most State-of-Mainers "butter gravy"—is made, and cubed hard-cooked eggs are added to it. The salt fish, arranged on a platter with its blanket of egg sauce, is surrounded by the vegetables, and pork scraps act as a garnish. Usually there's a big plate of johnnycake, too, and steamed apple pudding with nutmeg sauce. It is always common procedure to cook enough fish and potatoes to have plenty left over for another meal. These are chopped lightly together and mixed with the cold egg sauce and pork scraps, then cooked in the spider until a golden-brown crust is formed. Served with pickled beets or cole slaw, hot biscuits, and warm apple pie, it's a meal good enough for anyone.

But where an island cook really shows her colors is at church suppers, or suppers to raise money for the Sea Coast Mission nurse. The pivot around which the meal revolves is baked beans, soaked overnight, then parboiled, and baked in a slow oven for at least eight hours. Hot brown bread,



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potato salad, cabbage slaw, and every kind of relish and pickle make up the hearty foods. The desserts, though, are where the cooks really match their skills. Custard pie, yellow with eggs and at least three inches thick; apple, mince, squash, and lemon pies; whipped-cream cake; coconut layer cake; nut cake; filled cookies; and, usually, on every table a big plate of chocolate doughnuts, a great favorite with the menfolks.

Unfortunately, packaged puddings, piecrust, cake mixes, and all the rest of the ready-prepared tribe are beginning to appear on island grocers' shelves and vaunt their second-rate goodness. But there are still a few island cooks who believe that the old-fashioned ways of cooking are best!



## X V

# Boothbay Harbor Region

DURING July and August the narrow streets of downtown Boothbay Harbor are a miniature Times Square, with motor cars from every state in the Union and crowds of visitors milling around the attractive shops of the town. It's a typical summer scene in a Maine resort town.

For a quick flashback in time, some lovely summer day take a boat near Fisherman's Wharf and sail out across the bay to lonely Damariscove Island. In only a matter of minutes you can bridge a span of three hundred years or more as you see off in the distance a long low-lying stretch of land silhouetted against the horizon—Damariscove. As the boat nears the island and skirts its shore, the only signs that man has ever visited this lonely spot are two or three weather-beaten houses with chimneys still intact (at least from the distance, they look firm and upright),

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a small tower, and an American flag flying over a cluster of Coast Guard buildings. It is a barren place, devoid of trees except for a cluster at the northern end. The gulls wheel overhead and the surf breaks against the rocks just as it did in the early 1600's when thirty or more vessels often rode at anchor in the little harbor, and English, French, and Dutch traders met and bartered with one another and with the Indians. It was to Damariscove, the records tell us, that in 1622 messengers came from the starving Pilgrims, and aid was given that carried them through the long hard winter.

Not far from the head of the harbor is a fresh-water pond near which Captain Kidd—or more likely Dixey Bull, the English trader who turned pirate—is said to have buried his treasure. In the marshy places of the island cranberries grow, and in the fall of the year the ground is crimson with the small wild berries. Roses bloom in the early summer, the bushes, so the story goes, having been brought from France hundreds of years ago by French trading vessels.

Damariscove is a fairly good-sized island—about two miles long but less than a half-mile in width in many places. The name comes, doubtless, from the name of the man who owned it, Humphrey Damarill, a seaman who died in Boston around 1650. Captain John Smith knew this island. In 1614 he mentions the islands of this section, referring to them as Damaril's Isles. Today, except for the men of the Coast Guard and an occasional lobster fisherman who camps on the island and hauls his traps offshore, Damariscove is deserted, but the surf still pounds against the rocks and the sea birds fly overhead.

## *Islands of New England*

Few spots along the Maine coast are busier during the summer months than the waters around Boothbay Harbor, where fishing boats, yachts, and island ferries are going in all directions. Close in to the landing from which the excursion boats leave is Cow Island, or Marsh Island as it is now called. Here Frederick Marsh, a New York artist, built a studio which looks like a miniature lighthouse or observatory.

At the mouth of the harbor lies Tumbler Island, a spot of land with a trim white house surrounded by a well-tended lawn. Just beyond at the right, on Mouse Island, a tall flagpole with a flag waving in the breeze marks the summer home of Harry Emerson Fosdick, formerly pastor of New York's famous Riverside Church. Here in his study on this twenty-acre island, with the ever-changing panorama of the harbor spread out before him, Mr. Fosdick has written some of his best-known works. Not far from Mouse Island is Burnt Island Light, marking the entrance to Boothbay Harbor. Here since 1821 a light has been blinking.

Capitol Island, formerly called Pig Cove Island, was renamed because so many of the first cottagers came from the Kennebec region around Augusta, Maine's state capital. It lies close to the shore, being connected to Southport by two bridges, and, like most of the inner islands along the coast, is heavily wooded with evergreens, the cottages making a patchwork of color against the green background as you sail by.

When is an island not an island? Southport seems like mainland, a continuation of Boothbay, but in reality it is separated from the mainland by a narrow channel, Town-

## *Boothbay Harbor Region*

send Gut. A heavily wooded island with miles of delightful drives and several hotels, Southport has a large summer population. At the ocean end is one of the most popular hotels along the coast, Newagen Inn. Off the end of Southport is a seven-acre bit of land, Cape Island, or Jerry's Island, where a nationally known artist has his summer home and studio.

Probably the most important settlement in the harbor is Squirrel Island, a one-hundred-thirty-acre island, lying about three miles straight out to sea from Boothbay Harbor. Squirrel was known and mentioned by the early explorers and is one of the oldest summer resorts along the entire Maine coast. It was first bought for a jug of rum, then later was owned by a Squire Greenleaf, who in 1870 sold it to a group of men looking for a place for their families to rusticate during the summer months. Back in the days of the river boats and the horse and buggy, families came down from the Kennebec River towns and stayed the entire summer, the menfolks joining the women and children week ends and for their two weeks' vacation. Early in the history of the island an association was formed, the land on which the cottages stand being owned by the association and rented to the cottage owners. This organization held—and still holds—annual meetings, each property owner—man or woman—having a vote. Islanders contend that this is one of the first instances where woman suffrage was tried.

Today the island retains much of its Victorian charm. Granddaughters of the early families exchange bits of local news as they meet each other on the miles of side-

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walks that crisscross the island. Tennis and moonlight sails are enjoyed as well as trips into the Harbor to shop or see a movie. Squirrel Inn is in operation, attracting newcomers as well as old guests. Fifty years ago a little paper called the *Squid* was published on the island, which claimed that "more kissing is done to the square inch on Squirrel wharf than on any other place on the continent." It's doubtful if that record still holds!

Many islands off the coast of Maine are mere piles of rock, with patches of scanty vegetation and skeletons of dead trees in which perch the black, weird-looking cormorants, or shags. Some of the larger islands, even sizeable ones too, are as lonely and untouched by human hands as they were when the Norsemen sailed along these shores centuries ago. Ledges and heavy seas have made conditions for landing too difficult, except perhaps for a few days during the entire summer.

Outer Heron Island, one hundred fifty acres in area and six miles from the boat landing at the Harbor, is heavily wooded in the center but is uninhabited, though occasional picnic parties may visit it on a pretty summer day. A favorite diversion is to hunt for Viking hieroglyphics which are said to exist on some of the island's ledges.

Fifty years or more ago a story about Outer Heron Island was written by "Uncle Dan" of South Bristol, Maine, and printed in the *Damariscotta Herald*, a weekly newspaper no longer published under that name. It was titled "The Mystery of the Lost Grave":

The custom of burying the dead on islands and in the corner of apple orchards on farms, has almost disappeared

## Boothbay Harbor Region

throughout New England. Now and then a good father and mother still want to rest near the scenes of joy and sorrow, where they have spent so many years of life. Occasional vessels coasting along the shores in early days were wont to give their stricken comrades a Christian resting place on shore. As the outer islands afforded this opportunity and were less frequented, many rude head stones have been found on them, where some sailor or fisherman, far from his people, has been consigned to mother earth. The Buccaneers of importance and captains with letters of Marque, who died on the cruise or from wounds in conflict were frequently disposed of this way, in the somber hours of night with the rolling breakers as their only requiem.

Monhegan Island and Outer Heron afford this opportunity. The spots were generally marked with stones from the beach and the casual passers-by regarded them with proper respect and a seaman's superstition never to molest the dead. For many years such a spot existed on Outer Heron Island three miles due south of the mouth of the Damariscotta River. The fishermen and lobster catchers of Boothbay and South Bristol all knew of it, and the story was told that one of the free booters of the ocean during the naval battle of the *Boxer* and *Enterprise* in 1813 off this shore, was here consigned to earth without ceremony one dark and dismal night. No one had ever disturbed the grave. It was in the open and a path from the most convenient landing passed directly by it. Water washed stones had been placed over it, taken up from the beach. Some said they did not believe it was a grave and that valuable treasure had been secreted there by a band of pirates.

Fifty years ago a strange Englishman came to South Bristol. He was a man of education and refinement and a lawyer, representing the highest court of the British Crown. He had many papers and diagrams indicating the various islands, extending well out to sea, among them

## *Islands of New England*

Monhegan, White Island, Outer Heron, Witch Island and Damariscove. He was commissioned by his government to find the grave of a claimant to many millions of dollars, and by various marks, including a seal ring, known to have been buried with Captain Drake of the ship *Belgarde* from Liverpool. His map contained no names of Islands, but one diagram clearly indicated "Outer Heron," and he anxiously questioned many of the inhabitants for information relative to any grave there might be there.

Uncle John McFarland, a well known citizen, still hale and hearty at a good old age, was then a young man. He told the enquirer of the lone grave, and how it had been on the Island ever since he was a boy. The lawyer was more than pleased to know that his long search for the dead heir was about to be finished, and offered to pay well for any help he might have in unearthing the remains or what was left of them. He was sure the family ring, coming down from a titled ancestry, would be there and this was the missing link in his legal proof. Together they set out one bright morning to find the grave and open it. Uncle John expected to walk directly to the spot. He had passed it so many times since his boyhood.

They landed in a cove on the eastern end of the Island and went up a well worn track. No grave was there. Not a foot mark. Not a head stone. No sign of overgrowth, save a few stunted junipers. They searched all day. They covered every available spot on the Island. Others who asserted that they could find the grave were enlisted in the quest, but all of no avail. For many days the search was not abandoned. Evidence was taken of all who had noted the spot and the story was retold again. The lawyer was at last compelled to give up the search and went back to England. The missing ring was never found. The Drake estate of millions passed through the Chancery Court and became crown Lands, while to the present day no one has been able to solve the mystery of the Lost Grave.



## *Boothbay Harbor Region*

There are two White Islands on the outer rim of the harbor, one bare and desolate. The only inhabitants are the cormorants nesting in the branches of the dead trees. On the other island is a single camp perched high on the cliffs with the whole Atlantic spread out at its feet. This house belongs to a man nationally known as a manufacturer of anchors.

Sailing westward you see wicked-looking ledges, The Hypocrites, then Fisherman Island comes into view. High and barren, with a great stone house near the center, Fisherman Island seems like some remote spot in the Old World where monks might live in an ancient monastery. A Unitarian clergyman owns the island and it is opened for a portion of each summer as a retreat for ministers.

Nearer shore are several smaller islands—Ram Island, where a lighthouse stands; Negro Island, with two cottages; and, in Linekin Bay, Independence Island, formerly known as Cabbage Island.



## X V I

# By Land or by Sea

WEBSTER'S *New Collegiate Dictionary* gives this definition: "A tract of land surrounded by water, and smaller than a continent." There are people benighted enough to contend, however, that the minute a bridge is thrown across from an island to the mainland it ceases to be an island. In fact, when the Bailey Island bridge was built not too many years ago, one gentleman sold his holdings and moved off. "It is no longer an island," he said.

Some of the most interesting islands to drive on are described in other parts of this book—Moose Island (Eastport), Capitol, Deer Isle, Bailey and Orr's, Sebascodegan, Mount Desert—but there are many more in this same category.

## *By Land or by Sea*

The section between the eastern extremity of Casco Bay and the western entrance to Penobscot Bay is a perfect hodgepodge of necks and islands, several connected to the mainland by bridges. Leaving U. S. Route 1, Maine's coastal route, at Woolwich, across from Bath, you cross the Sasanoa River on a new bridge to Arrowsic Island. Rather uninteresting country today, with scattered houses, many old and weather-beaten—but turn back the pages of history and you'll find plenty of action. Only a short distance off the road Hockomock Point marks the site of a settlement made by Major Thomas Clarke and Captain Thomas Lake, two Boston merchants who established a trading post here as early as 1650. In 1654 they bought the island and built several dwellings, a warehouse and barracks. In 1670 there is said to have been thirty families living here. Across Hockomock Bay was the home of Sir William Phips, or Phipps, the Maine boy who in 1692 became Massachusetts's first royal governor, and who was knighted in the reign of William and Mary for his salvage of treasure from a Spanish ship wrecked off the Bahamas. Here at the shipyard of Clarke and Lake, Phips worked as a young man.

One of the great men of his time was Samuel Denny who was born in England in 1689 and came to Arrowsic in 1717. For thirty-four years Denny was town clerk, and during that time he published himself three times and married three wives. Now Denny and his wives lie buried side by side, in the old Denny cemetery near the west side of the island.

The year 1675 saw the beginning of the French and Indian wars, which lasted for seventy-five years or more.

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The following year an attack was made on the Clarke and Lake fort at Arrowsic and most of the residents were killed or taken captive. It was almost forty years later, in 1715, that this settlement was rebuilt. In 1717 a council was held at Arrowsic when Governor Shute met the Indians and presented them with a Bible translated into the Indian tongue.

A bridge at the lower end of the island connects Arrowsic with Georgetown, a big sprawling island whose population is largely centered in five small villages. On the eastern shore is Robinhood, a collection of lovely old houses, glistening and white in the sunlight, and a big substantial store, serving the countryside around as well as the adjacent islands. One of the first settlers was Benjamin Riggs of Gloucester, a privateer who was captured off the coast by the British and held prisoner at Castine. Making his escape after a few months, Riggs worked his way along the coast on foot with occasional lifts across an inlet in a dory by some kindly fisherman. Reaching Edgecomb, he spent a couple of days at the home of Major Pearl, who gave him another lift, setting him down at the spot where the little village of Robinhood now stands. The story, as told by Mr. Edward Clarey, a descendant of one of the first settlers and a man well versed in local history, is that Riggs looked around the spot where he landed and exclaimed, "This is the place I want to settle!" Not too much later, he wound up his affairs in Gloucester, came back to the island, and built the beautiful square white mansion which is still known as the Benjamin Riggs house. For many years the little village

## *By Land or by Sea*

was known as Riggsville, but in 1914 its name was officially changed to Robinhood, in memory of Robin Hood, a famous Indian sachem who flourished in these parts many years ago.

Robinhood is a busy spot during the summer months. It's a taking-off place for MacMahan Island and the lower end of Westport Island. A ferry shuttles back and forth to MacMahan, carrying groceries, mail and passengers. With a summer post office but no hotel, the cottagers on this island garage their cars at Robinhood.

Five Islands is a small fishing village on Georgetown, quiet and almost deserted in winter, but during the summer months well-nigh "busting at the seams." There really are five islands: Georgetown (the parent island), Malden, Crow, Hen, and Mink. Malden Island, like MacMahan, Isle of Springs, Squirrel Island, and many others, is controlled by an association which owns the land while the residents own their own cottages. In many cases, grandparents, parents, and children have come to these islands for seventy-five years or more.

From Bay Point on the west side of Georgetown, you can look out over the site of the Popham Colony, founded only a short time after Jamestown. Here, in 1608, was built the *Virginia of Sagadahoc*, the first English ship to be built on this side of the water. The great stone fort, built before the Civil War but never completed, looms up in the distance. On high Long Island at the mouth of the Kennebec River stands a square white house. This is the island and the house of which Elizabeth Etnier wrote in her delightful book, *On Gilbert Head*, and here is where she lived with her husband Stephen Etnier, the painter.

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Just recently, at the lower end of Georgetown Island, the Reid State Park has been opened for public use. In 1946 Governor Horace Hildreth accepted for the state of Maine from Walter E. Reid, three hundred fifty acres of property which included three beaches and densely wooded evergreen forests. Now, on a summer Sunday, cars loaded with picnickers come from all over the state.

With its tip end almost touching Georgetown Island, Westport is a long narrow strip of land lying between Montsweag Bay and the Sheepscot River. Up until a very few years ago, a most primitive type of ferry took you on the island. More than once this ferry sank with a car aboard, and the islanders tried for years to get a bridge. At long last the bridge was opened in 1950, and now, just a short distance off Route 1 west of Wiscasset, you can drive onto Westport Island. Years ago, Westport was called Jeremy Squam Island.

A large white house, a typical State-of-Maine dwelling with a big central chimney, once stood on Westport Island but, probably during the latter part of the eighteenth century, was moved on a scow across the water to North Edgecomb. This house is known as the Marie Antoinette House, for here, the story runs, Captain Samuel Clough had arranged to bring the imprisoned queen of France to end her days in exile. Unfortunately the plans didn't materialize, for the queen was beheaded before she could be smuggled aboard the ship.

Lovely country roads thread their way over Westport, with here and there glimpses of the water beyond. At one point looms the great wooded cliff known as Doggett

## *By Land or by Sea*

Castle. The island is entirely rural, with scattered houses but no villages or settlements of any size.

Across the Sheepscot River are several islands you can drive on, Hodgdon's, Barter's, and Sawyer's. Near as they are to the busy streets of Boothbay Harbor, these islands seem remote and isolated as you ride along the lonely roads by occasional farm houses, with glimpses of summer homes near the shore. From Sawyer's Island with its view across to Westport and down the river to Spectacle, Indiantown, and Boston Islands with Southport just beyond, cottagers take the ferry across to beautiful Isle of Springs, still called incorrectly on some charts, Sweet Island. According to local tradition the island was owned in the old days by the Swett family and was formerly called Swett Island.

Only a few miles by water from the Boothbay region, but much farther by land, lies Rutherford Island, better known as South Bristol, with Christmas Cove at the ocean end. You can turn off Route 1 at Damariscotta and follow for several miles the Damariscotta River, then cross the bridge over The Gut, which separates Rutherford Island from the mainland. You hardly know that you are on an island. South Bristol is a real fishing village but Christmas Cove is 90 per cent summer people—the kind of summer people that State-of-Mainers like.

Rutherford Island—a name seldom used at the present time—got its name from Reverend Robert Rutherford, "a Presbyterian clergyman of good character and superior ability who came here as a chaplain to Governor Dunbar in 1729." It was Governor Dunbar who, under the direc-

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tion and at the expense of the British government, rebuilt Fort Frederick at nearby Pemaquid in 1729-1730.

The waters around South Bristol and Christmas Cove are studded with islands. Some, like the Thread of Life, are mere ledges where vessels have been piled up on the rocks in the past hundred years or so. Others are ever-green-covered—like Thrumcap, or Inner Heron with its colony of cottagers. Thrumcap seems to have been a favorite name for small islands. In olden days, weavers or spinners had tag ends of the warp, several inches in width; these were called thrums and were often used by the mothers of the family for making small caps, like toboggan caps, for the young folks. Any tiny island shaped like a cap might be called Thrumcap.

Just offshore is beautiful John's Island where Gene Tunney and members of the Lauder family have summered for many seasons. Many stories cling to this little island. Tradition has it that a tavern, a large frame house, once occupied the northern end, in the days when rum was free as water to the sailors and fishermen who might have the price, a sixpence of English coin in the days of George the Third. Among the regular patrons was a Portuguese sailor who made his home at the tavern when in port. Joe always had plenty of gold and silver when he returned from his voyages, and always wanted the same room, overlooking the channel separating the island from the mainland. Time went on, so the story runs, and in a foreign port the Portuguese lay dying, but before he breathed his last he gave to the comrade attending him a crude map of John's Island, marked by a tree and an arrowhead point-

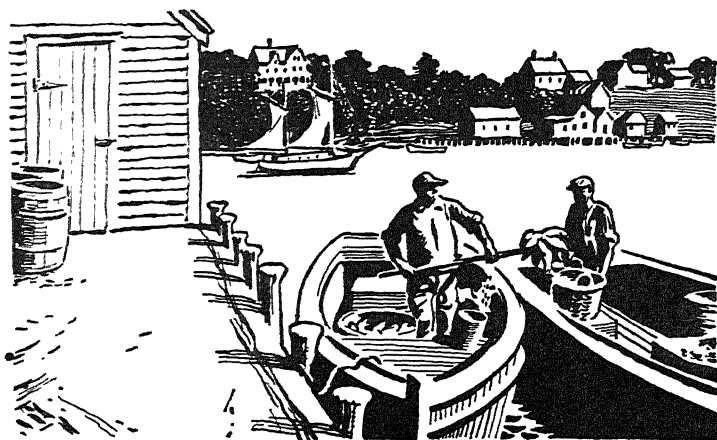


## *By Land or by Sea*

ing to a clump of rocks near the bank, covering an old well. "Follow that mark and in the bottom of the well you will find more gold and silver than you can carry, but you must go there in the night. I helped to put it there from the pirate craft *Dare Devil* commanded by Dixie Bull," said the dying man.

At his first chance after his return, the comrade and a trusted friend went to the island in the dark of the night when the whole section was "thick o' fog." Stealthily making their way to the spot marked on the chart, they were just starting to dig when a crashing sound came from the growth of cat-spruces that lined the ridge. Out of the woods loomed up the form of a huge black stallion, charging straight for the diggers. Dropping their tools, the two men raced for their dory and rowed madly to the mainland. On two different occasions after that the men attempted to dig for the treasure. Each time they were driven away by the huge stallion. Returning to the island by daylight, they could see the horse's hoofprints but not a sign of the animal. To this day, no one has ever been able to explain the mad stallion nor has anyone ever recovered the treasure.

First-time visitors to the state of Maine who think they can see the rugged coast by driving at top speed along Route 1 will be sadly disappointed. You need time and a love of exploring. Follow the scallops that hang down into the sea, not the main ribbon of road that gives you miles of uninteresting country. Seek out the little villages where men still make their living by lobstering and fishing, and where tourists are accepted but aren't the main business in life.



## X V I I

# East Casco Bay

BY LAND OR BY SEA. That is the way you can reach the largest islands of this rugged group at the eastern end of Casco Bay. During the summer months excursion boats from Custom House Wharf in Portland stop at Bailey Island, then go on up Merriconeag Sound to Orr's Island. Only a short sail from Orr's up Harpswell Sound, with picturesque Harpswell Neck at your left, and you pull into the dock at Gurnet at the end of Sebascodogan Island. These islands, together with the neck, make up the town of Harpswell.

Time was when a trip overland to the tip of Bailey was quite a chore. You traveled a dirt road, rutted and sometimes deep with mud. You rattled across wobbly wooden bridges and on the length of Orr's, where a signal flag was

## *East Casco Bay*

raised and the ferryman came over and rowed you across Will's Gut in a dory.

Now all this is changed and a smooth modern highway runs the length of the islands, with well-built bridges to connect them. At no other place in the world can you see a bridge like the one joining Bailey Island to Orr's. A similar structure had been built in Scotland, but during World War II it was destroyed by bombing. Here at Will's Gut the tide at times rushes through with great violence, and in the spring ice jams pile up between the islands. No mortar or cement was used in the building of this bridge, but great granite blocks were laid honeycomb fashion, thus allowing the tides to flow freely through the openings.

On the United States Geodetic Chart it is known as Sebascodegan Island; in town terminology it is East Harpswell; in common usage, it is Great Island—all different names for something that doesn't even seem like an island as you drive across the narrow channel that separates it from the mainland. The main road bisecting the island runs through a rather uninteresting country of pines and junipers and white birches with glimpses of coves and inlets and islands here and there. This is the country that Robert P. Tristram Coffin loves and talks about in *Lost Paradise*, *Yankee Coast*, and others of his books and poems.

You can take the Cundy's Harbor road to the left and pass the graveyard which lies on either side of the road. In *Yankee Coast*, Mr. Coffin writes: "Over yonder, east of Cranberryhorn, where the sun came up for me as a child, near the little yellow schoolhouse where patched little boys still hear the April peepers beyond Decimals

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and Fractions, is the graveyard where I hope I may lay my bones, when I am through with them, in my own Great Island earth. It is the region where I courted my wife. She is lying there now. And if we don't come to a resurrection, some evening when the silvery peepers are beginning, then our island mayflowers there told us a lie."

Close to the road is the black slab, like many of the simple old stones in this same yard, where Ruth Phillip Coffin lies buried. Wild strawberries and fir trees decorate the stone, and below is this verse written by her poet husband:

Summers when the years were young,  
You climbed this hill, you chose  
This graveyard for your own between  
The spruces and wild rose.  
Now on the island where you found  
Wild strawberries and love  
You lie in the graveyard of your choice,  
And the sea winds blow above.

Deer stare at the tinkling cows,  
Rest, where you chose to be,  
The high fog comes in over the hill  
With gray eternity.

Not often does a name fit a place so perfectly as Cundy's Harbor seems to fit this little hamlet on the east side of Great Island near the mouth of the New Meadows River. Cundy's Harbor looks like just what you might expect from its name: a cluster of white houses with the good straight lines of yesterday; a couple of wharves where lobsters are bought and where the fishermen come for supplies; a post office in a general store where a cribbage game

## *East Casco Bay*

is often in progress; not too many summer people, and those of the more sturdy type. Except for a few nondescript houses near the bridge, Cundy's Harbor is the only village on Great Island.

As you leave Great Island and cross the bridge to Orr's, the road follows the ridge of the island with magnificent ocean-view stretches. At the west is the long, narrow Harpswell Neck, studded with cottages and year-round homes. Sometimes on a clear Sunday morning you can hear across the water the ringing of the bells from the church at Harpswell Center where Elijah Kellogg, a famous writer of books for boys, was pastor.

Orr's Island is probably one of the best known of the islands of the Casco Bay group, thanks partly to the imagination of Harriet Beecher Stowe. Mrs. Stowe, wife of a Bowdoin professor in nearby Brunswick, had written the enormously successful *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and had become a real celebrity, but she loved the Maine coast and the little fishing villages along the shores. To reach Orr's nearly a hundred years ago, she must have taken the long hard ride with horse and buggy over narrow rutty roads and across the two crude bridges which connected Brunswick with this little island. Today, at Prince's store near the Bailey Island bridge, they will show you the white house on the hill facing the store where Mrs. Stowe is said to have spent six weeks one summer, enjoying the lovely scenery and making copious notes in a little black notebook. From these notes came the early American classic *The Pearl of Orr's Island*.

If you reread your copy of this quaint book and at-

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tempt to reconstruct its scenes, you will be unsuccessful. You can, however, see an attractive white house on the west side of the island, away from the main road and setting close to the shore. This is the house in which Mrs. Stowe placed her heroine.

From the Bailey Island bridge Pond Island and Ragged Island are plainly visible. Barren Pond Island has always been the locale for ghost stories and pirate yarns. It is now owned by Robert P. Tristram Coffin. Years ago, when the poet was a boy, the Coffin family lived on Pond Island in a high wooden house, and when the wind blew a gale, as it often did, they anchored the house down with chains. If the wind changed in the night, they had to get up and shift the chains. Finally the family moved off the island to the mainland, loading the house on a schooner and taking it along with them.

On beautiful Ragged Island one of America's greatest poets, Edna St. Vincent Millay, had her summer home for several years. She had always loved the Maine coast and as a girl knew intimately the islands of Penobscot Bay. When she was only nineteen, and at that time living in Camden, "Renasceance" was written, with its lovely opening lines:

All I could see from where I stood  
Was three long mountains and a wood,  
I turned and looked the other way,  
And saw three islands in a bay.

Often during her summers on Ragged Island, the fragile Miss Millay, dressed like a fisherman in oilskins, rubber

## *East Casco Bay*

boots and sou'wester, came into Prince's store for mail and provisions. This same island was also the scene of Elijah Kellogg's famous Elm Island series of books for boys.

About two and a half miles long, from the bridge to Jaquish Point at the tip of the island, Bailey is in many places so narrow that you can look out over the bay in either direction. Off at the right at the end of Harpswell Neck is Haskell Island, a lovely wooded bit of land which has a gruesome story. Some of these island tales may be taken with a grain of salt, but a Bailey Island fisherman with a reputation for honesty insisted that the following story is really true. "My father knew the man," said he, "and there's no doubt about what happened to him."

Like hundreds of other islands along the coast, Haskell was used for pasturing sheep. An old man named Humphrey lived on the island in a little shack near the shore. He was a lobster fisherman and occasionally slaughtered a few sheep for the Portland markets. Like most places where there are bait barrels, there are plenty of rats, so Haskell Island was overrun with hundreds of these rodents and the old lobsterman did nothing about them. Finally, however, winter came and the old man "holed up" on the island. Every morning the Harpswell fishermen watched for the smoke from Humphrey's chimney to know that he was all right. One cold day no signs of life were visible around the cabin, so several men rowed out to the island to investigate. They made their way into the shack with rats swarming in every direction, and there in his bunk lay the old man, or what was left of him after the

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rats had finished. Today the island is calm and peaceful, and among its present owners is Jimmy Doolittle.

Showing out by the end of Haskell Island is Jewell Island, named for its first white settler, George Jewell, and not for the jewels and treasure reputed to have been buried along its shores. Heavily wooded, with tiny coves and inlets well-nigh hidden from passers-by, Jewell was long the rendezvous of pirates and smugglers, and in its early days, at the time of the French and Indian Wars, the scene of a bloody massacre. Today Jewell is just another beautiful island, its two hundred twenty acres being maintained as a private estate.

Facing South Harpswell but hidden from Bailey Island by Haskell Island lies Eagle Island, for nearly fifty years the summer home of the Peary family. Here, in September 1909, Mrs. Peary received word from Admiral Peary that he had discovered the North Pole. High rocky cliffs are on the landward side of the island with the house perched at the summit. Here, and in the library and museum on either side of the house, constructed out of native rock, are mementos of the explorer's far-flung travels. Perched on the parapet of the house is a huge bronze eagle with outspread wings, showing that this little island was once the nesting place of these birds. Looking toward the east one sees Mark Island with its three-cornered marker which served as a model for the monument erected in honor of the explorer at Cape York in Greenland in 1932. Eagle Island is still the summer home of the Peary family, and



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when they are in residence a large American flag flies from the flagpole in front of the house.

Bailey Island has always been a great place for legends and stories. You can talk with almost any old-timer and hear an interesting family yarn. Sinnett has long been an island name and the first member of this clan on the island, a lad by the name of Michael, was a glove-maker in Ireland. One day Michael and a friend were on holiday in Belfast and, while strolling along the docks, were invited to view a ship lying at anchor. Unsuspecting and rather green, they were delighted at this opportunity. The first thing they knew the ship had set sail for America and they were held as prisoners on board. Happening to be in Boston when the vessel docked, Joseph Orr was in need of a husky farm boy. So, paying the boy's passage, Orr took him back to the island. In due time Sinnett worked out his debt, purchased a small farm and in later years became one of Bailey Island's most prosperous citizens.

Part way down the main highway to the left is a little white house, with the date 1763 high on the gable end. This is the "Captain Jot" house, built by an early Johnson and still owned by a member of the same family. Local history tells us that young Captain Johnson sailed his boat out of Bailey Island to a port in the West Indies. Here he met Sophia Letournier, whose father was French and whose mother was of Dutch parentage. After several trips to the Indies and a suitable courtship the young couple was married and the captain brought his bride

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home to Bailey Island, where the little white house—even smaller then than it is today—was waiting for them. The story goes that young Sophia passed months of homesickness but finally came to love the island and made the captain an excellent wife.

Less than a mile below the Captain Jot house, and around the road to the left, are the Giant's Steps or the Devil's Stairway, as it is often called. This is a great flight of stairs, each over a yard in length, cut into the rocky sea wall as though by a giant's hand. Of course legend would have it that here pirates were wont to land their treasures and bury them nearby. In order that this interesting formation might be always accessible to the general public and not restricted by private ownership, Captain W. H. Sinnett, who owned this eastern side of the island, gave this area around the Giant's Steps to the town of Harpswell, of which Bailey Island is a part.

Though there are only two or three hundred inhabitants during the winter months, the summer population of Bailey soars to several times that number. Small hotels and boardinghouses are available for those who do not own cottages. Sailing, salt-water bathing, hiking, and the annual Tuna Fish Tournament staged by the local club are among the island's amusements.



## X V I I I

# The Islands of Casco Bay

STATE-OF-MAINE folks like big yarns. To say that there are three hundred sixty-five islands in Casco Bay—an island for every day in the year—makes a good story, but it's a rank exaggeration. If you forget the ledges that show only at low water and count the bits of land that are large enough for a man to stand on, it might add up to two hundred or more, with probably around half as many that can be classed as honest-to-goodness islands.

Casco Bay is an almost twenty-mile stretch of water, extending from Cape Elizabeth on the south to Cape Small on the north. Midway between these two points is Half-way Rock Light. The bay proper covers an area of approximately two hundred square miles, with its islands falling into three main groups: the inner range, near the mainland; the middle range; and the outer range. You could never hope in a day, a week, or a month to really know these islands. It takes years of living—not just in

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the summer season, either, but in the long winter months when you can really get to know the island people, many of them descendants of early settlers. Then you may sometimes hear the old tales and legends that have become a part of Maine's rich background.

Portland is of course the usual port of departure for Casco Bay islands. In fact, several of the islands make up the insular ward of Portland, many of the year-round residents commuting to business and their sons and daughters attending Portland High School.

It was Henry W. Longfellow, Portland's favorite son, who wrote about his home town in "My Lost Youth":

Often I think of the beautiful town  
That is seated by the sea;  
Often in thought go up and down  
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,  
And my youth comes back to me.

. . . . .

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,  
And catch, in sudden gleams,  
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,  
And islands that were the Hesperides  
Of all my boyish dreams.

. . . . .

I remember the black wharves and the ships,  
And the sea-tides tossing free;  
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,  
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,  
And the magic of the sea.

Nowadays, of course, when you rumble along the cobblestones of Portland's waterfront to Custom House

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Wharf for a trip around the islands, you aren't likely to see "Spanish sailors with bearded lips" and the tankers and freighters of today are less romantic than the sailing vessels of Longfellow's time. But the sea still has magic.

During the summer months several boats a day give the tourist a quick look at the islands. Soon after you leave the wharf you pass by two formidable-looking old forts, Fort Gorges on Hog Island, which is only a barren reef, and Fort Scammel on House Island. Imposing-looking though they are, both Fort Gorges and Fort Scammel are of little importance. The former, named for Sir Ferdinando Gorges, was built about the time of the Civil War and evidently was not too highly thought of even at that time, as it was facetiously called "Davis's Folly," a reflection on the judgment of Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War.

Even as far back as 1661, the records show that a house had been built on House Island, but it was not until early in the 1800's that the United States government bought twenty acres on this island and constructed an octagonal blockhouse of timbers, later replaced by granite. This was given its present name to honor Colonel Alexander Scammel, a Revolutionary soldier.

If you are lucky, for your trip out of Portland you will have a day clear as crystal, one of those State-of-Maine days when the evergreens on the distant islands stand out against the sky like etchings. If the season is nearly over, only a scattering of people and perhaps a big yellow dog will be on the wharf as the boat pulls into Little Diamond, a small island occupied only by summer people. As you leave Little Diamond for the short run to

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her sister island, Great Diamond, you can look over the sand bar which connects the two islands (but is completely covered at high tide), and see off in the distance Mackworth Island, or "Marky's Island," as it is most commonly known. This is an inshore island connected to the mainland by a long bridge, and owned for many years by the Baxters, a prominent Portland family. Mr. Percival P. Baxter, a former governor, recently gave the island to the state, and on the site will be constructed new buildings for the Maine School for the Deaf. Mr. Baxter has also given the state \$500,000 for the new school, as well as an additional \$175,000 for a new bridge to the island.

What's in a name? For well over two centuries Great Diamond went by the unromantic name of Hog Island. Pasturing hogs and sheep on the outer islands was common practice to guard against attack from Indians and wild animals, and even today flocks of sheep are the sole occupants of many of Maine's smaller offshore islands, their enemies on the mainland being dogs, not wolves.

Great Diamond's history has been long and colorful. As early as 1635 Sir Ferdinando Gorges conveyed the island to Richard Tucker and George Cleeve, the founders of Portland. One of the high spots in its annals was the day in 1732 when two hundred Indians in full war regalia and carrying the French colors met here for a conference with the governor of Massachusetts. Another memorable day was in 1759. The English had just captured Quebec from the French and were in the bay loading supplies for the King's Navy. They took a day off to have an uproarious barbecue on the shores of Hog Island. The natives talked about it for years afterward.

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Great Diamond is a beautiful spot. High wooded headlands, green fields abandoned long since but in years past furnishing great boatloads of hay to be sold in the Portland markets, attractive summer homes dotted about a portion of the island. At the eastern end, practically hidden from the passing small boat, is Fort McKinley looking out over Hussey's Sound, one of the principal waterways leading to Portland Harbor.

It would be hard to state exactly how many Long Islands there are along the Maine coast. But five miles or so from Portland's Custom House Wharf, and a part of the city of Portland, is Casco Long Island, over nine hundred acres in extent, but long and narrow as its name implies.

Long Island is a happy mixture of summer folks, year-round natives (three hundred or so of them) and bustling naval activity. Not far from the rugged shore line an excellent road runs along the mainland side of the island. Sandy beaches and delightful paths through the woods are among the island's attractions. On the ocean side a picturesque little cove, Harbor de Grace, is a snug anchorage for fishing boats, even in winter, as the outer harbor is always open and free of ice. Not far away is the "Singing Beach," where, at just the right conditions of wind and tide, curious "musical" notes are emitted. Some say the sound comes from loose pebbles being swept forcibly across the hard surface of the beach.

Recently Long Island has been taken over as a fueling depot for the United States Navy. Near Cleaves Landing a large sign reads:

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

FUELING PIERS

INFLAMMABLE

DO NOT MOOR

Only the gulls seem to ignore this warning, for on every one of a dozen or more posts is "moored" a big lazy sea gull.

Like the Diamonds, there are two Chebeagues. Just before World War II year-round and summer residents on Little Chebeague (area about seventy-five acres) were forced to vacate. The government took over the island, using it as a Naval Recreation Center.

Great Chebeague is a good-sized island, nearly five miles long and, in width, varying from one to two miles. "Plenty of room to turn around in," they say. Approximately three hundred people are all-year residents of Chebeague, many belonging to the same old families who settled the island. In summer the population increases by fifteen hundred to two thousand. Each year a few families stay later in the fall, and occasionally become year-round residents. As one ex-city woman said: "We have every convenience that we had on the mainland—electric lights, stove and washer, deep freeze, furnace and telephone—and we don't have the noise and the confusion and the traffic to battle with."

You can leave the boat at Chandler Cove and a bus will take you up a winding gravel road on a sight-seeing tour of the island. It's a simpler trip than when a traveler went by horse and buggy and there were thirteen gates to open going up the island. Sometimes the road goes through the



## *The Islands of Casco Bay*

woods with never a view of sea, and you might well imagine that you were miles inshore in Maine countryside. But soon you come out in the open and your view extends for miles with Great Moshier and Little Moshier and Bustin's and Little Bangs and Stave and Whaleboat and dozens of other islands and ledges dotted here and there over the water. It's a real feat to know which is which.

On the Hook or Indian Point, near the sand spit joining Great Chebeague with its smaller sister, is a solitary tree with a colorful history. The story is that it dates from the time of Wentworth Ricker who came to the island in 1791. Ricker had a garden on this point of land and one day he discovered a tiny oak tree growing there. He cared for the tree and, as years went by, it became a landmark. Early in the twentieth century this portion of the island was purchased by Ellis Ames Ballard of Philadelphia, who built a beautiful summer home overlooking Indian Point and the waters beyond. He too cared for the tree and spent hundreds of dollars in keeping it in good condition. Its best test came in the 1938 hurricane when younger trees everywhere succumbed while this venerable old oak stood firm and upright and today is still a landmark to Chebeague islanders.

As you ride around the island and comment on especially attractive houses, you are sometimes told, "Oh, that was built with Stone Sloop Money." In the latter part of the nineteenth century, and even in the early part of the twentieth, Chebeague Stone Sloops were a familiar sight on Maine coastal waters. During those years Maine granite was used in tremendous quantities, not only in the construction of buildings, bridges, and lighthouses but also as

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ballast in the launching of ships. The great granite blocks were carried in Chebeague Stone Sloops, usually owned in shares and manned by a crew of four or five Chebeague islanders. Many a comfortable fortune was built up in the Stone Sloop era.

One of the most scenic golf courses anywhere is on Chebeague. It lies on the ocean side of the island and commands a superb view of the eastern bay. It even has a tiny cemetery within its borders.

As the boat leaves Great Chebeague it heads toward a small wooded island with a large white house set high above the sea. Hope Island, once the home of Senator George W. Elkins of Pennsylvania and now owned by a private club, is one of the most attractive of the smaller islands.

Straight ahead of Hope Island lies Cliff Island, once called on United States Geodetic charts by the descriptive term Crotch Island. This too is a ward of Portland, and boys and girls make the round trip daily across the bay to attend high school. Around three hundred people live winter and summer on Cliff Island, and fishermen and lobstermen moor their boats in the snug coves and harbors on the southeastern side of the island. Summer cottages skirt the shore near the boat landing. Many of Cliff Island's residents are Seventh-Day Adventists and observe the Sabbath day on Saturday.

A stock tale told to all visitors to the island has for its villain one infamous Captain Kieff who lived on the island in the early days. Let a bad storm come up and the wicked captain—an ex-pirate and smuggler, so the story runs—

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would fasten a lantern to his horse's neck and ride him up and down the shore. Pilots, seeing the light, would steer their vessels in that direction only to be wrecked on the dangerous reefs that border the island. Tradition has it that the scoundrel got rich on the spoils from the wrecks. All that remains today is the story, many times told, and a grassy meadow called "Kieff's Garden," where the captain buried the trusting sailors.

Probably the best-known island in Casco Bay is Peak's. The first time we made the trip was in January, after a heavy snowstorm. The storm had ceased, the skies had cleared, and at Custom House Wharf the circling gulls were silhouetted against the deep blue of the sky as they wheeled and swooped down to the murky waters below. The decks of the fishing craft at anchor at the dock were piled high with snow, which men were pushing into the water.

As the Peak's boat headed across the bay, Fort Scammel lay to the right, covered now with a white blanket. The snow-laden trees on the mainland and on the islands in the distance, the Diamonds and Cushing, gleamed and glistened in the sunlight. Peak's lies only three miles or so offshore from Portland, and frequent boats cover the distance across in fifteen or twenty minutes. On a winter's day, women with shopping bags and their arms loaded with bundles make up the principal passenger list. Portland is the island's shopping center, for Peak's is a commuters' island, another insular ward of the city of Portland. The early morning boats to the city are thronged with men on their way to work and with boys and girls going in

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own to high school. On a fine day in the fall or spring the youngsters sit on deck doing hectic last-minute studying before the boat docks. Several hundred people live on Peak's Island the entire year, but the number is greatly increased during the summer months by folks from all over the country and from Canada.

Like most of the other islands of this region, Peak's was a favorite rendezvous of the Indians, and numerous relics have been dug up from time to time. Later, fishermen settled the island, and at one time in the early days the whole area was held by four families—Brackett, Sterling, Trott and Skillings—the entire island being divided into four strips with each man having his own wharf on the shore facing the mainland.

Due to its proximity to Portland, Peak's has always been a favorite place for picnics and vacations. Over a hundred years ago young men rowed their girl friends out to the island for a day's outing. As methods of transportation improved, the island increased in popularity, reaching its high point in the Gay Nineties—the period when every city of any size had its favorite amusement park. On Peak's it was Greenwood Park, and vaudeville, roller skating, and fireworks were the chief attractions.

Like a miniature Broadway, Peak's had its golden age in the theater, too, and here for many seasons Bart MacCullum, a native-born Portland son, produced a large repertory of popular plays with scores of aspiring actors and actresses, a few of whom moved on to later fame and success in the New York theater. Many a gray-haired Portlander, man or woman, will become mildly sentimental when they reminisce about the good old days when for

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twenty-five cents they could do the round trip on the boat and see a good show out at Peak's.

Lest all this adds up to the fact that Peak's is a "has-been" town, we must hasten to affirm that such is not the case. If you leave Portland's Congress Street on a mid-summer day—noisy, dusty, and sweltering hot—board the Island boat for a cool quarter of an hour sail across the bay, and land at the island, where a soft breeze is usually blowing, then you can understand why, over the years, Peak's has retained its position in the affections of so many people. Peak's is one of the most densely populated of the islands along the coast, yet each little house and cottage has plenty of space around it and nearly everyone has a gorgeous view. To look across the bay at night to the lights of Portland and its environs, and to see the twinkle of the cars in the distance moving along the highways, is always a thrill.

Halfway up the hill, not far from the Forest City Landing, is a neat white cottage, one of the oldest houses on the island and the home of Robert Thayer Sterling, who has come back to his birthplace to live after many years in the lighthouse service. Mr. Sterling has written *Lighthouses of the Maine Coast*, one of the best books ever published on this interesting subject, and now writes occasional magazine articles telling of his many adventures tending to the lights.

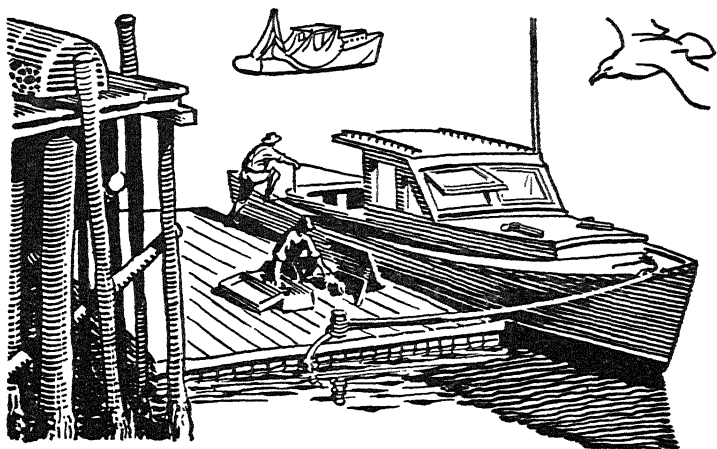
Plainly visible from Peak's is a massive headland of granite rising 150 feet above the ocean. This is White Head on nearby Cushing Island, a landmark to any vessel entering Casco Bay.

## *Islands of New England*

In 1623 Captain Christopher Levett built a substantial house of stone at the northern end of the island and traded with the Indians, exchanging jewelry and cheap trinkets for valuable furs. Over fifty years later the island served as a place of refuge for white settlers fleeing from the mainland when attacked by Indians.

It was before the American Revolution, in 1762, that the name Cushing first came to the island, when Colonel Ezekiel Cushing, who was profitably engaged in the West Indies trade, built a fine house on the island where he did a lot of entertaining. For many years the social life of the island centered about the Ottawa House, a favorite resort of Canadian summer visitors. This hotel was twice burned, and was never rebuilt after the fire in 1917. Today Cushing Island has many fine summer homes where Portland people and many Canadians spend their summers.

To the vacationer looking for an island retreat in which to spend his precious two weeks, yet loath to give up the comforts of everyday living, the Casco Bay islands offer a perfect solution.



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## Aristocrats of the Sea

THE OUTERMOST ISLANDS off the Maine coast for years have been famous for their lobster catch. Many of these islands are bare and desolate, with only the sound of the waves and the shrill voices of the gulls to disturb their tranquillity. Many are mere ledges and rocks, standing stark and black above the restless surface of the ocean. There are no better lobsters in the world than those that come from the ice-cold waters of this region.

On a beautiful summer day, as the islanders say, "a pretty day"—when the sea and the sky are a deep, deep blue and when the waves break gently against the shore with little crests of foam—starting out and hauling a hundred or so lobster traps looks like fun. And to most island lobstermen it is fun, or they wouldn't be doing it. They're a hardy lot, sturdy and independent. Plenty of them can trace their families back to those early State-of-Mainers

## *Islands of New England*

who were always somewhat of a thorn in the sides of the strait-laced Puritans. Taking orders from the other fellow just isn't in their grain; they'd rather be masters of their own little boats and kowtow only to the wind and tides.

Islanders—many of them—still believe in signs and, on Matinicus, when a crow flies over Ragged Island it's a pretty good indication of fair weather; when the gulls soar high in the air there's likely to be a storm. Fishermen are firm believers in weather signs, and lobstermen are no exception. They study their barometers and listen to the weather reports, but they still watch the cat when she sits in front of the stove washing herself. The foot she throws over her shoulder points the way the wind will blow.

There is plenty of action in the morning, with the splash of the oars and the put-put-put of the powerboats as the fishermen take off. The less hardy souls keep fairly close to the home base, but most island lobstermen have good sturdy powerboats, and they may go ten or fifteen miles away to set their traps.

Lobsters, the aristocrats of the sea, are curious creatures. When taken from the ocean, they are dark greenish in color, but on rare occasions red, yellow, and bright blue lobsters have been caught. Lobsters, when excited, can jump backward at twenty feet or so a second. When cornered or surprised, they may raise themselves on the tips of their walking legs, lift their powerful claws like a boxer, and strike their enemy, trying to crush and tear it to pieces. If a lobster loses his claw, he can grow a new one. The only way a lobster can grow is by shedding his entire shell, which he usually does during the



## *Aristocrats of the Sea*

summer months—although young lobsters will molt or shed as many as twenty times the first year. The shell of the lobster cracks straight down the back and he walks right out from under it. During the period between the shedding of the old shell and the hardening of the new shell, the lobster goes through a rapid period of growth to achieve as much increase in size as possible before the new shell is sufficiently hard to restrain its growth.

During recent years scientists have carried on considerable research in an attempt to answer the question, "Why does the lobster shed?" Authorities say that before the lobster casts his shell most of the calcium salts contained in the shell have been absorbed in the bloodstream and deposited in a pair of sacs called the gastroliths, which are located in the stomach. At the same time the meaty part of the lobster absorbs large amounts of water. This explains why a "shedder" is never the best eating.

After the old shell is dropped off, the pink skin of the shedder begins to harden, slowly but steadily, getting its calcium salts from the gastrolith deposits. He gains in weight and grows about one fourth to one half an inch longer. When once encased in the new shell, the lobster grows no more until the next shedding period. While the new shell is hardening, the lobster crawls in nearer shore and hides under the rocks, away from marauding codfish and his other enemies. So, at this time of year the lobstermen set their traps in shoal water close to the ledges and the shore.

A thrifty lobsterman has a string of a hundred fifty or so traps, or pots, as the older men still call them. He builds these traps himself and, today, with astronomical

## *Islands of New England*

prices for materials, his traps may stand him not too much under a ten-dollar bill apiece. And if a good stiff gale comes along, he may lose half or more of them. A recent early winter storm destroyed 47 per cent of the lobster traps along the Maine coast. Of course, if the lobsterman is forehanded, as a Yankee is supposed to be, he'll have some spare traps on the bank ready to set out.

Lobster traps vary a good deal in structural refinements, but basically all are cratelike containers made of laths. The lobster, attracted by a bag of bait hanging inside, crawls through a funnel-shaped net at either end of the trap. Once inside he has the devil's own time getting out, and sometimes he succeeds only in getting tangled up in the net. Once in a while a Phi Beta Kappa lobster with a lot of patience and cunning manages to escape, but not enough get away to dent Maine's enormous lobster take. A typical year's lobster catch may be over ten million pounds, more than the total take of all other states put together—and lobsters are caught as far south as Delaware.

The traps are weighted with flat stones and are slung on a rope, or warp, whose length varies with the depth of water in which the traps are to be set. On the other end of the rope is a wooden buoy, painted with the lobsterman's own color and branded with his name and license number. A glass ball or bottle holds the buoy to the surface of the water.

Hauling lobster traps is no work for a weakling: it requires strength and skill, and knowledge of tide, wind, and weather. The traps may be hauled every day, but during a spell of bad weather they won't be touched for

## *Aristocrats of the Sea*

a couple of weeks. When the lobsterman gets to his grounds, he'll idle down his engine, reach for the warp with his gaff, wind the slack around the winch, and pull the dripping trap up to his gunwale. He shakes off the sea urchins clinging to it, opens it up, and sorts out the contents. He may find all sorts of queer creatures along with lobsters—crabs and "wrinkles," starfish and sea spiders, sea urchins and sea fleas, sculpins and dogfish, and sea mice and sea cucumbers. Almost anything may turn up in a lobster trap.

After the trap is cleared, the bait bag is emptied into the ocean, where its pungent contents are gobbled up by shrieking gulls. Then a filled bait bag is placed in the trap, the door is buttoned down, and the trap slides back to the bottom of the sea. As the fisherman works his way around the islands and about the ledges where the fat, lazy seals are sunning themselves, he'll be filling his bait bags or having a midmorning mug-up with coffee from a vacuum bottle, or fresh from the coffee pot on the little stove in the cuddy below.

A man never knows what the day's haul may be. There may be no lobsters in the trap or there may be half a dozen, but perhaps not one of them is a "count" lobster, so all must go back to the sea. Every lobsterman has his gauge, and if he isn't sure of the size of a lobster, he measures it.

Maine has a double-gauge law. This means that no lobster can be kept whose length is under three and one eighth inches or over five inches. The larger ones are thrown back for breeding purposes. This measurement is taken "from the rear of the eye socket along a line par-

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allel to the center line of the body shell to the rear end of the body shell; and any lobster shorter than three and one eighth inches when caught shall be immediately liberated alive at the risk and cost of the parties taking it, under a penalty of five dollars for each lobster so caught, bought, sold, given away, exposed for sale, or in possession, and any lobster longer than five inches, when caught, shall be immediately liberated alive at the risk and cost of the parties taking it, under a penalty of twenty-five dollars for each lobster so caught, bought, sold, given away, exposed for sale or in possession."

If a person is caught tampering with another man's lobster pots, he faces a stiff fine or imprisonment, or both, and his license "shall be revoked immediately by the Commissioner of Sea and Shore Fisheries."

Lobster fishing is on a cash basis, and when a man comes in from his haul, he can sell his lobsters and get his money. At Matinicus there are two buyers, and whenever the men are out hauling, these buyers are on hand, ready for business.

For days, even in summer, a man may not be able to haul his traps because of heavy fog. There is always work to be done, though—traps to be repaired and built, buoys to be painted, and so on. For days at a time the fog may hang like a thick white blanket, blotting out the island. It's a dream world set down in the midst of a boundless sea, and the men in oilskins and sou'westers pass one another like wraiths on the narrow winding path leading from the fish houses to the store. It's boat day perhaps—and they've all knocked off work to get the mail and to see who and what came on the boat.

## *Aristocrats of the Sea*

When the cold weather comes, the lobsters crawl out to sea and lie partly buried in the ocean bottom to keep warm. In the early days of lobster fishing, these shoal places, or hubs, where the lobsters lay, were discovered and named for their discoverers—Harrison Hub, Will Hub, Frank Hub. Every fisherman has his favorite winter grounds and his own system of marking. Here's the way one of them describes his winter trap setting:

"You leave Matinicus and go fifty minutes west sou'-west, until Green Island is fetching up over Camden mountain and Isle au Haut is over Tenpound, then you set ten traps south for a mile and that brings Isle au Haut over Criehaven. . . .

"Winter fishin' ain't no fun. The first ten traps you haul, a ball of ice freezes round your mittens. You have to thaw out your mittens and thaw out your bait, and you have to keep the lobsters in a tub of salt water; if they git cold, they shoot off their claws. I remember one time Wilmer and I went down to Seal Island to haul our traps. 'Twas the thirty-first day of December and two below zero. I took the peapod and went to western end to haul up around Eastern Breaker. Wilmer took the big boat and went to Three Fathom.

"It come in thick o' vapor. Wilmer didn't show up when 'twas time to go home. I begun gittin' uneasy—'twas gittin' 'long towards dark. Finally, I went ashore on Seal Island and hauled my boat up to high-water mark—hunted round and found an old tar kittle. I built a fire and that old tar kittle blazed up like all tarnation. I knew I was all right and could keep from freezin', but I was 'bout crazy worrying 'bout the boy. After a while the

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vapor settled and the fellers on Matinicus see the fire and come after us. I says, 'I'm O.K., but go and see if you can find Wilmer; he set out this mornin' for Three Fathom.' 'Twasn't long before they was back. Wilmer'd broke the shaft in his boat, an' there he set. 'Fore many hours more, he'd been froze stiff as a haddock. They towed us back home and we wasn't too bad off, except Wilmer'd froze his ears and we lost the peapod we was towin'. We was some lucky, though. If a good stiff gale had come up, we would 'a' been goners."

Lobsters may be expensive for city folks to buy, but the lobsterman earns every cent he gets. A few years back he might come in from a haul and not get enough to pay for his gasoline. Maine's lobster industry was well on the way toward oblivion. Both the state and Federal governments were attempting to halt this downward trend by buying seed lobsters and releasing them along the coast or by removing the eggs from the female lobsters and planting them in different sections. Unfortunately, lobster eggs float on the surface of the water and are the easy prey of gulls and other birds.

In 1938 Maine built a rearing station at West Boothbay Harbor. Rearing was started at this station in 1939. During August and September female lobsters are bought by the state and are placed in a pound at Johns Bay, Bristol, Maine, where they are kept until late April or May, when they are brought to the United States Fisheries Station in West Boothbay Harbor. Here, the female lobsters which carry the eggs packed closely under their tails—sometimes seventy-five or eighty thousand to a single lobster—are

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placed in tanks of circulating sea water. When the eggs are ready to hatch, the lobster flaps its tail and the fry, or first-stage, lobsters fall off and are carried by the water to a collecting tank. Here they are placed at once in receptacles and taken to the State-of-Maine Lobster-Rearing Station next door. For fifteen or sixteen days these tiny lobsters are fed every two hours, usually on finely ground beef liver, and during this time they shed their shells three times, until finally they reach the fourth, or free-swimming, stage, when they are taken from the rearing station and liberated in shoal places along the coast. These miniature lobsters are about three fourths of an inch long and can go to the sea bottom, away from the enemies that might prey upon them at the surface of the ocean.

From this point on it takes about five years for the lobster to reach first market size. In 1944 there was a marked increase in lobster poundage in Maine, and the commissioner credited a lot of this to artificial propagation, and also to the co-operation of the fishermen in the enforcement of the present laws.

Lobster is a food for the epicure wherever it is served, but you'll never be able to equal lobster as it's cooked by a State-of-Maine fisherman on the shores of Penobscot Bay.

Sometimes there's a lobster bake. Driftwood is piled high and the fire burns down to a bed of glowing coals. Heaped on this is wet seaweed, then a layer of live lobsters—not less than three for every person. The lobsters are tucked in with another blanket of seaweed and left strictly alone for half an hour or so. Emerging red, steam-

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ing, and fragrant, they can compete for honors with any food in the world.

There's little talk at a lobster bake. Each person chooses his own table, turns his back on the rest of the world, and goes to work silently on his lobsters. There are always a few real gourmets who think the most delectable part of the lobster is the tomalley, which is the liver; they beg or steal it from everyone else.

If the lobster bake is held the latter part of June or early in July, there's only one possible dessert—tender, flaky shortcake biscuits, smothered in crushed, wild strawberries, with thick Jersey cream to pour over them.

For those people who don't have the Atlantic Ocean for a back yard and who have to buy their lobsters at the market, there are certain things to remember. A lobster about one and a half pounds in weight is a good size to buy. Either buy a live lobster or, if you get one that has already been cooked, be sure it was alive when it was put in the boiling water. You can tell this by noting whether the tail curls up underneath, and whether, when the tail is pulled out straight, it springs back into place. If the tail hangs limp and lifeless, the lobster was dead before it was cooked.

Sea water is best for boiling lobsters, but it probably isn't handy, so salt the water liberally and have it boiling vigorously when you put in the lobsters. Boil them around twenty minutes, depending on their size. You can tell when a lobster is done by pulling out a small leg; if it comes out easily, the lobster is cooked enough.

There's no better tipoff on an amateur cook than the way he opens a lobster. An expert has the lobsters as hot



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as he can handle them; they shell out more easily that way. He gets a good comfortable place in which to work; he has a board, a sharp knife, and a fork, and a box of crackers on which to eat the tomalley.

He seizes the lobster in both hands and breaks off the tail at the point where it joins the body. He bends off the flaps at the end, then, with a fork or finger, pushes the tail meat out through the larger end. He takes out the dark intestinal line and, if he's not too strong-minded, immediately eats the whole tail, without even waiting to shell the rest of the lobster.

The two claws come off next; some people use a hammer or a nutcracker, but an expert pulls off the little claw, then, with a sharp blow of the knife, cracks the shell, and the claw meat comes out whole. The little morsels between the joints or knuckles come out easily with a fork, and the small legs are for sucking, one by one.



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## A Few Scattered Islands

IN SEVERAL PUBLISHED ACCOUNTS of one particular small island in the eastern part of Penobscot Bay the details of the stories are rather gruesome. Pickering Island lies four miles from the mainland, the nearest point being Cape Rosier. It is a small island, only about two hundred twenty-five acres, with several rocky caves along its shores. Many years ago, so the story runs, a Dr. Davis of New York bought the island, built rather pretentious buildings, sailed his own boat, and seemed like a substantial citizen. The following summer several women were brought to the island—the doctor's patients, it was said. In midsummer, at the time when berries ripen along the coast of Maine, a boatload of natives approached the shores planning to land and go berrying. Their approach must have been noted for, before anyone could step ashore, two savage dogs came

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charging down to the water's edge, followed by a man calling out that visitors were not wanted. Other attempts to land met with the same reception.

Time went on and occasionally more women were brought to the island, but no one ever saw a woman leave. Sometimes shrieks were heard by lobstermen hauling their traps off the shores of the island. These reports weren't taken too seriously, though, until several other fishermen revealed that they, too, had heard anguished cries of, "Help! Save me! Murder!"

Finally the sheriff was authorized to investigate. Not a woman was found, but plenty of evidence was discovered that the house had been used as a prison. The doors were heavy, with narrow slits on either side, and leading from the house to the sea was an underground passage. But, most horrifying of all, was a huge oven in an outbuilding, partially filled with quicklime. Some thought that the patients were insane and were made away with by the doctor; others held that the doctor was insane and used the women for experimentation. The outcome of the story depends on which newspaper account you read. One version has it that the doctor escaped and was never brought to justice; another account says that the doctor was arrested, convicted of manslaughter, and imprisoned for several years. Take your choice.

In an attempt to track down this story, I talked with several older residents on Little Deer Isle, only a short distance across the water from Pickering Island. All these men and women had visited the island many times on picnics and berrying expeditions, and several recalled that there had been some yarn about the island but they

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couldn't remember just what it was. Finally, at a little store reached by a rutty dirt road, and with two or three houses making up the entire community, I found a man, "too old to go lobsterin' any more" who was "well up" on Pickering Island.

"I've been round these parts purty nigh onto seventy years," he said, "and my father before me, but I never heard of any such yarn as that. There was a Dr. Collins who bought the island and put up a nice stand of buildings—one of 'em was a kind of Spanish castle with a cupola. He set out an orchard and elm trees and had some good farming land. Later on the island was owned by a Boston man, a buyer for a big drug concern. I never heard nothin' about any crazy women."

But it certainly made a good story.

West of Casco Bay, and half a mile off the south shore of Cape Elizabeth, lies Richmond Island. Only two hundred acres in area, it was a thriving business center in the early seventeenth century. In 1627 a trading post was established here by a John Burgess, Sr., and after his death the island was taken over by Walter Bagnall, a notorious character who, because of his unfair practices, was murdered by the Indians. In 1632 John Winter established a shipyard on Richmond Island, and for several years vessels from his yard were engaged in carrying lumber, fish, and oil to England. Today the island is a private estate, maintained as a summer residence.

Near the mouth of the New Meadows River in Casco Bay is a beautiful island with a grim history. Once it

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was occupied by a "king" and his subjects. At least, the man called himself a king and the other people on the island paid him homage. "King Jim" was a real dictator: his word was law and he ruled his underlings on Malaga Island with an iron hand.

This self-styled ruler was a man of "color" and his "subjects" were of varying shades. One story is that, over a century ago, a Portuguese sailor, perhaps from the Cape Verde Islands, landed on this little island. As the years went on other Negroes—possibly escaped slaves from the South—Indians and white men joined the colony. Time moved on until finally, through intermarriage and the inroads of disease, the island was peopled with the feeble-minded and the physically unfit. It was this sorry lot over whom King Jim made himself ruler. The people were unable or unwilling to earn a living, and finally the whole community became state paupers. In 1913 the colony was broken up, and a few of the worst cases went to the School for Feeble-Minded in Pownal; others, unfortunately, were scattered about the state. Seeing this lovely island today, many people have forgotten its distressing history.

Just off Bass Harbor Head on the southwestern point of Mount Desert lies Great Gott Island, the French called it Petit Plaisant or Little Placentia, but in 1789 it was purchased for eighteen pounds by Daniel Gott from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and ever since it has held the name Great Gott Island.

Arizona and Nevada have their "ghost towns"—Tombstone, Jerome, and Virginia City; Maine has its "ghost is-

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lands," of which Great Gott is a fine example. For many years this island was a thriving community with a school-house, post office, church, an Episcopal chapel, and a goodly number of people. It was a prosperous little settlement, but finally discontent crept in. The younger folks wanted automobiles on the "main," and going across to the movies was too much of a chore, so they pulled up stakes and moved inshore, and for twenty years or so, except for a few weeks in summer, the island has been almost a ghost town with its twenty-four empty houses. Many times the only resident on the island during the winter months has been George Montell Dorr Gott, an ex-lightkeeper, with his varied assortment of pets.

Another island formerly a flourishing community is Bartlett's in Blue Hill Bay, just across from Pretty Marsh Harbor on the western side of Mount Desert Island. Several miles of good highway cut through the island and men made a good living with farming and fishing. But finally the lure of the city was too great and, one by one, the families moved inshore. For several years Bartlett's Island has been owned by Phillips Lord, the creator of the Down East character Seth Parker, and the producer of many other radio shows.

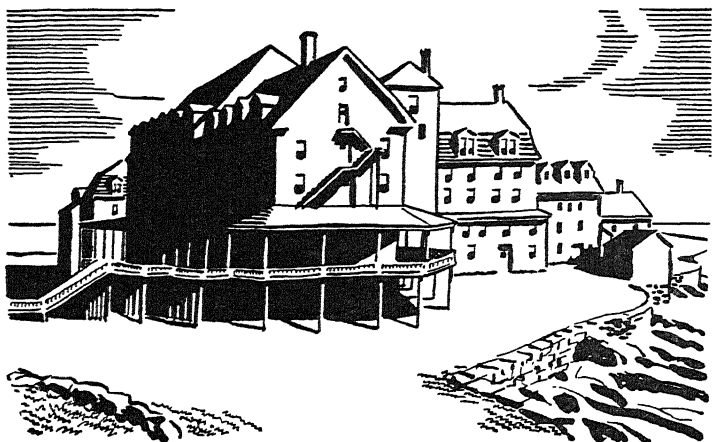
The coastal area east of Petit Manan Light has been called "the yachtsman's paradise." It's a lonely section, only tiny settlements on the mainland, and the islands for the most part uninhabited. Sometimes, day in and day out, it is "thick o' fog," but when the fog lifts and the sun shines across the sparkling water, some of the most superb views along the coast come into view.

In the early part of the century, Head Harbor Island,

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east of Great Wass Island and only a short distance offshore from Jonesport, was a busy place. Fully two hundred people lived on the island, making a living either by fishing or working in the quarry, where a thriving business was carried on turning out paving stones. Almost fifty years ago, the Maine Sea Coast Mission built a church and held regular services on the island. But after a time granite was no longer used in street building; business fell off and the quarry closed. Finally, many of the houses were loaded on scows and moved to Jonesport. The church was sold, but the stained-glass windows were carefully removed and installed in the little meetinghouse at Frenchboro Long Island. Today the island is deserted except for a summer home and a fisherman's shack. But the view from the summit of the island, extending from Mount Desert to Grand Manan, is still magnificent.

For over one hundred years Roque Island, near Roque Bluffs on Englishman Bay, has been owned by the Gardner family of Boston, who have maintained here summer homes and farms. The island is a delightful spot. To quote from *A Cruising Guide to the New England Coast* by Blanchard and Duncan, a book that is indispensable to anyone sailing along the coast: "This island [Roque], one of the most beautiful on the coast, offers about anything the cruising man can ask for. Here are excellent beaches, rugged rock formations, protected harbors with good holding ground, good clamming—everything but movies and supplies."



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## Isles of Shoals

THE ISLANDS of this group are small, but what a checkered career they have had! With a land and rock area of only about three hundred fifty acres, they could all be enclosed in a rectangle about three miles north and south by less than two miles east and west. In 1635 the state line was drawn, giving Duck, Appledore, Malaga, Smuttynose and Cedar Islands to the town of Kittery, Maine, and Star, Lunging, White and Seavey to New Hampshire. This list adds up to nine, but only at high tide. When the tide is low, White Island and Seavey are one island.

Lying 10 miles straight out from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, the Isles of Shoals are indistinct and cloudy shapes, barely discernible in the distance as you leave the harbor. This group is so named, not because of the ragged reefs that lie submerged in the waters surrounding the is-



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lands, but because of the "shoaling" or "schooling" of fish about them. John Smith, when he cruised this coast in 1614, made a map of this area and called these islands "Smith's Isles," but the name didn't stick. However, two hundred fifty years later, in 1864, a monument was erected on Star Island in honor of Captain Smith.

Tradition has it that people lived on the Shoals as early as the 1600's, not too long after Smith visited the coast. It seems that in the early days women were not welcome. In 1647 a complaint was made against a man for bringing goats, hogs, and a wife to the islands. The animals disturbed the fish that were drying on the flakes, but the records fail to state what havoc was wrought by the wife.

The first settlement was on Appledore, or Hog Island, as it was then called. This is the largest island of the group, with an area of about one hundred thirty acres. Celia Thaxter, the Shoals's favorite daughter, in her classic *Among the Isles of Shoals* (a fascinating book to read even today, nearly seventy-five years after publication) has this to say about the early days: "For more than a century previous to the Revolutionary War there were at the Shoals from three to six hundred inhabitants, and the little settlement flourished steadily. They had their church and school-house, and a court-house; and the usual municipal officers were annually chosen, and the town records kept. From three to four thousand quintals of fish were yearly caught and cured by the islanders; and, beside their trade with Spain, large quantities of fish were also carried to Portsmouth, for the West India market."

The usual approach to Appledore is by Babb's Cove.

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Here, where a Coast Guard boathouse now stands, Philip Babb had his butcher shop, and here he died in 1671. A legend long prevailed on the islands that Philip Babb in "a coarse, striped butcher's frock, with a leather belt to which is attached a sheath containing a ghostly knife, sharp and glittering" was wont to haunt Appledore.

Not far from the landing dock on this island are the ruins of the Appledore hotel, and nearby the foundations of Celia Thaxter's cottage remain.

It was well over a century ago, in 1839, that the Loughton family—Thomas B. and his wife, four-year-old Celia, and the infant, Oscar—landed at White Island. The elder Loughton, disgusted with New Hampshire politics, had sold out his business in Portsmouth and obtained the position of keeper at the Isles of Shoals Light. Eight years later Loughton built the hotel on Appledore.

In 1852 Hawthorne wrote in his *American Notebooks*: "We landed at Appledore, on which is Loughton's Hotel, —a large building with a piazza or promenade before it, about an hundred and twenty feet in length, or more,—yes, it must be more. It is an edifice with a centre and two wings, the central part upwards of seventy feet. At one end of the promenade is a covered veranda thirty or forty feet square, so situated that the breeze draws across it from the sea on one side of the island to the sea on the other, and it is the breeziest and comfortablest place in the world on a hot day."

When just a young girl Celia Loughton had married Levi Thaxter, and the name Celia Thaxter was beginning to appear in the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine and other publications. To her home on Appledore came many of the

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celebrities of the day—John Greenleaf Whittier, William Morris Hunt, James Russell Lowell, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Frances Hodgson Burnett, James T. Fields and Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

Here on the west coast of Appledore, you can see today the Sandpiper Beach made famous by Celia's poem, "One Little Sandpiper and I," which begins:

Across the narrow beach we flit,  
One little sandpiper and I,  
And fast I gather, bit by bit,  
The scattered driftwood, bleached and dry:

The wild waves reach their hands for it,  
The wild wind raves; the tide runs high,  
As up and down the beach we flit,—  
One little sandpiper and I.

Somewhat back of the hotel ruins is the Loughton cemetery where rest Thomas Loughton, his wife, Eliza, and Celia Thaxter beside her brothers, Oscar and Cedric.

It was near Pepperell's Cove, also on the west side of the island, that William Pepperell, who came to Appledore in 1676 from Cornwall, England, lived. Here, in 1696, his son was born, another William, who later became famous as the hero of the Battle of Louisburg, Cape Breton, and was created a baronet in 1746 by George II, the first native American to be so honored. He remained active in Maine and Massachusetts affairs, particularly during the French and Indian Wars, until his death in 1759.

Star Island is less than a mile from Appledore. Around 1676 the center of population of the Shoals shifted from

## *Islands of New England*

Appledore to Star, which in 1715 became a town under the name of Gosport. For many years prior to the Revolution, the islands were quite prosperous, but from the outbreak of war down to about 1820, the inhabitants became degraded and devoid of morals and decency. Drunkenness was rife—town meetings were abandoned—the meeting-house was pulled down and burned—cohabitation was common even among closely related people. But through all these years the islands were not entirely given over to degeneracy, for from the days of 1640 when a flourishing church is recorded on the Shoals, even to the present time, when the islands are devoted almost exclusively to religious pursuits, a thread of hope and devotion to better things has kept life from completely disintegrating. During the period when affairs were at their lowest ebb, several devoted teachers and preachers worked to reclaim the inhabitants from wretchedness and ignorance.

Today the life of the Shoals is mainly on Star Island. Landing at the island pier you see, straight ahead, the Oceanic Hotel with several cottages to the left. Shortly after the building of the hotel on Appledore, the Oceanic opened its doors on Star Island, and eventually this, too, was owned by the Lughton family.

Near the east side of the island, close to the breakwater joining Cedar Island to Star, is Betty Moody's Cave. Here is the dark cavern where Betty Moody hid with her children to escape the Indians who were ravaging the coast at the time of King Philip's War.

Near the southeast end of the island is Miss Underhill's Chair. Hawthorne in his *American Notebooks* writes of this: "Not far from the spot [Betty Moody's Cave] there

## *Isles of Shoals*

is a point of rocks extending out farther into the ocean than the rest of the island. Some four or five years ago there was a young woman residing at Gosport in the capacity of schoolteacher. She was of a romantic turn, and used to go and sit on this point of rock to view the waves. One day, when the wind was high, and the surf raging against the rocks, a great wave struck her, as she sat on the edge, and seemed to deprive her of sense; another wave, or the reflex of the same one, carried her off into the sea, and she was seen no more. This happened, I think, in 1846." Only a year or two ago, several young men were sitting on this same spot. Before they could escape a great wave caught them and deposited them unconscious on the rocks below. Fortunately people were near at hand and they were rescued just in time.

Near the center of the island is the Tuck Monument, a granite obelisk erected to the memory of the Reverend John Tuck, who graduated from Harvard in 1723 and for over forty years served on Star Island as minister, teacher, physician, and magistrate.

The little stone meetinghouse stands near the center of the island, at its highest point. Tradition has it that the first church was built principally of timbers from the wrecks of Spanish ships, but was partially burned and twice restored. In 1800 the stone meetinghouse was built, and this was repaired and rededicated in 1839.

For many years the Shoals flourished as a popular summer resort but with the passing on of members of the Laighton family and with the rise in popularity of the automobile, business began to drop off. In 1896 Thomas

## *Islands of New England*

H. Elliott conceived the idea of holding Unitarian religious conferences at the Shoals. The first of these was held the following year and the meetings have continued as a yearly event. In 1916 Star Island and the entire Oceanic Hotel property were purchased by the Isles of Shoals Unitarian Association. Eight years later the association also acquired several acres and three buildings on Appledore. Every summer Star Island is the scene of a series of religious conferences. Usually there are six weeks of Unitarian meetings and at least a two-week Congregational conference, but other faiths and different creeds are welcome. In the words of the guidebook published by the Isles of Shoals Unitarian Association: "Star Island is dedicated by charter to educational and religious conferences. No subject vital to life is barred from discussion. Speakers and group leaders of many faiths and fellowships, of varying parties and creeds are invited to take part."

One of the most picturesque features of these affairs is the candlelight service, held nightly throughout the summer season in the stone meetinghouse. At the close of day, the visitors to the island meet at the foot of the hill and form a procession, carrying candle lanterns, just as the Shoalers of long ago carried their whale-oil lamps up this same winding path to the meetinghouse. There the lanterns are hung on the wooden sconces in the form of crosses, and their lights shine out through the windows and across the island. No word is spoken from the time the procession is formed until it returns, except for the words of the service in which all are united. But the silent march up the rugged path with lighted lanterns has be-

## *Isles of Shoals*

come a symbol of Christian unity sending its light around the world.

Between Star Island and Appledore and connected with Cedar Island by a breakwater is Smuttynose, a long low island now privately owned and having only a single cottage.

Not even the foundations remain of the Hontvet house on Smuttynose where, on March 5, 1873, occurred one of the most fiendish murders in American history. The two Hontvet brothers and a brother-in-law, Ivan Christensen—thrifty, hard-working Norwegians who had settled on Smuttynose and were making a good living by fishing—had gone into Portsmouth for bait for their trawls. Here at the Shoals wharf they ran across Louis Wagner, who had formerly worked for the Hontvets. Wagner, reasoning that the women would be alone on the island and suspecting that money was hidden in the house, rowed the long distance in a dory. The women were asleep with the doors of the house unlocked when Wagner crept in shortly after midnight. In only a few minutes that house was a shambles as the madman succeeded in murdering two of the women with a heavy axe while the third escaped through the window and hid until daybreak. After a long-drawn-out trial, the murderer was finally hanged at Thomaston, Maine, on June 5, 1875, only a few days before Maine ruled against capital punishment.

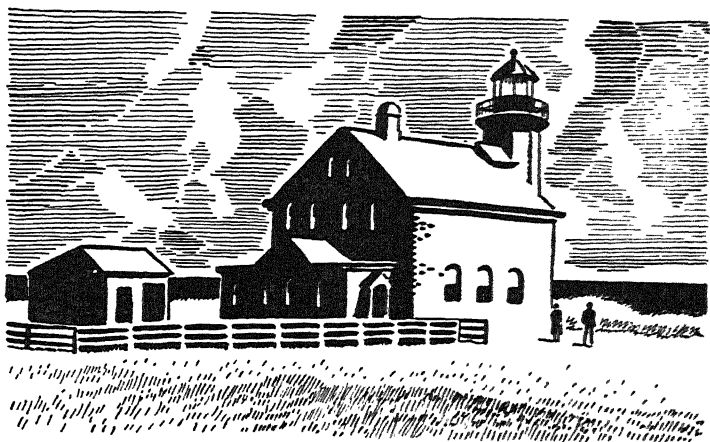
On Smuttynose is the Haley Breakwater, built in 1820 or earlier by Captain Samuel Haley. This breakwater was built with the proceeds from pirate treasure, for on Smut-

## *Islands of New England*

tynose treasure really was found—four bars of silver left many years before by unknown pirates who never returned for their booty.

Lunging Island, or Londoner's, as it was originally called, has an area of about fifteen acres and is privately owned. On this island is a cottage where food and clothing are kept throughout the year for the possible relief of people marooned or shipwrecked there.





## X X I I Block Island

IF YOU WERE BLINDFOLDED, then shipwrecked on Block Island there would be one feature that would help you to distinguish it from all the other islands: the miles and miles of stone walls that go uphill and downhill and criss-cross the land in every direction. Early Block Islanders must have been a hardy lot to have dug so many stones out of the ground and then laid them up in long symmetrical rows. The land is irregular and rolling, with hardly a tree to be seen, and here and there a fresh-water pond gleams in the distance. There are said to be over three hundred ponds on the island where plenty of fresh-water fish may be caught. Even today when most islanders get their living from the sea or by waiting on the summer trade, there are occasionally, as you ride over the is-

## *Islands of New England*

land, thrifty farms with good-looking herds of cows and hayfields and vegetable plots. Not many, though.

Block Island lies at the point of a triangle, about fourteen miles equidistant from Point Judith, Rhode Island, and Montauk Point on Long Island. In the winter a daily boat, *Sprigg Carroll*, leaves Point Judith each morning carrying mail, passengers, automobiles, cows, chickens, or what-have-you in the way of provisions and supplies. Under favorable conditions the trip takes about an hour and a half; another boat from Newport takes at least twice as long. In the summer months boats also run from New London and Providence, and the Point Judith boat makes two trips each day. In the winter of 1951 the population of the island stood at approximately six hundred persons, while the summer months boost that figure to several thousand. During July 1951, the boat records show that ten thousand cars were carried to Block Island.

It seems to be a truism everywhere that the point on the mainland which serves an island as its port of landing and departure always takes rather a sour view of island living. One worker around the docks at Point Judith said this: "Block Island!—What do you want to go there for? There's nothing there—period. But don't tell 'em I said so."

Plenty of people on the island would dispute this, and they aren't all natives either. Several families who have been long-time summer residents have winterized their houses and now make Block Island their all-year residences. "I'm fed up on traffic and all the hubbub of city living," they will tell you. "Here taxes are low and life is easy, and if we want to go to the city, we can tele-

## *Block Island*

phone for the plane and be at Westerly in less than fifteen minutes. We can fish for salt-water or fresh-water fish and can dig our own quahogs, and when we want an oyster stew, we go out and gather the oysters. We have most of the conveniences of city life with few of the disadvantages."

Among the native Block Islanders there are two names in direct descent from two of the sixteen original settlers. You can drive to the northern end of the island and stand at the very spot where, in 1661, Trustrum Dodge and Tormut Rose, with fourteen other men, first landed. To-day the place is called Cow Cove and the story runs that the party sailed into this lonely indentation of the island and, in order to test the depth of the water, pushed their cows overboard. As the animals had no difficulty in getting to the shore, the men followed suit. On a bar of land about one hundred feet wide, separating the salt water from a large fresh-water pond, stands Settler's Rock, with this inscription followed by names of the sixteen original settlers:

THIS STONE WAS PLACED HERE IN SEPTEMBER 2ND, A.D. 1911 BY THE CITIZENS OF NEW SHOREHAM, TO COMMEMORATE THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PURCHASE AND SETTLEMENT OF BLOCK ISLAND, BY THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS WHO LANDED AT THIS POINT.

At the time of the 1938 hurricane this narrow bar of land separating the ocean from the pond was broken through, and for some time the pond was filled with salt water, but in the years that have followed the sand has washed

in to close the opening, and now you can cast your line for a time in the salt water of the Sound, then turn your back on the ocean and catch plenty of fresh-water fish. A short distance beyond Settler's Rock stands North Light, a brown tower rising nearly sixty feet above the sea, its beacon visible for thirteen miles.

Block Island is about eight miles long and four miles wide at its widest point, and shaped something like a pork chop. About twenty miles of good hard road traverse the island, with considerable additional mileage of country dirt road. The Point Judith boat lands at New Harbor, but the economic heart of the island is at Old Harbor less than a mile away. Except for summer folks, the island's prosperity rests on fish and, in the early morning hours, this tiny harbor is filled with action as the boats make ready to set out for the fishing grounds. The kinds of fish they go after vary with the season. Mackerel and bluefish and yellowtail—the latter sold in the markets as fillet of sole—are leaders, but the most important catch of all—and the most exciting—is the swordfish. Most of the boats are small and carry only a few men as crew, but each man knows his job and exactly what he is doing. One man stands on the topmost point of the boat—sometimes for hours at a stretch—to sight the fish. When the black fin shows above the water, the boat is steered toward the spot and a man darts out on the pulpit of the boat with a long pole held poised for action. As the fish and the boat come nearer together, the harpooner lets go with all his strength and the tiny arrow-shaped harpoon pierces the great body. From this point on, it's a battle

## *Block Island*

between swordfish and man, as the man on one end of the warp and the fish on the other end play back and forth until finally the fish is tired out, and the final kill is made with a lance. After the fish is sold and the current expenses deducted, the remainder is divided into equal shares—one share for the boat and a share for each man.

The summer of 1951 was decidedly an off-season for Block Island swordfishing. Among the successful fishermen was seventy-six-year-old Captain Harry Smith, who landed one of the few swordfish caught during the season. Over thirty years ago Captain Smith was awarded a gold medal for extreme heroism by the Carnegie Foundation. It was in the sub-zero weather of February 1907 that a steamer and a barge collided off the coast of Rhode Island. A Block Island fishing boat, manned by Harry Smith, came to the rescue, and nineteen nearly frozen human beings were saved.

Block Island and the waters around it have been the scene of many shipwrecks since the early settlers first landed at Cow Cove. Even today with radio direction control an occasional vessel has been wrecked.

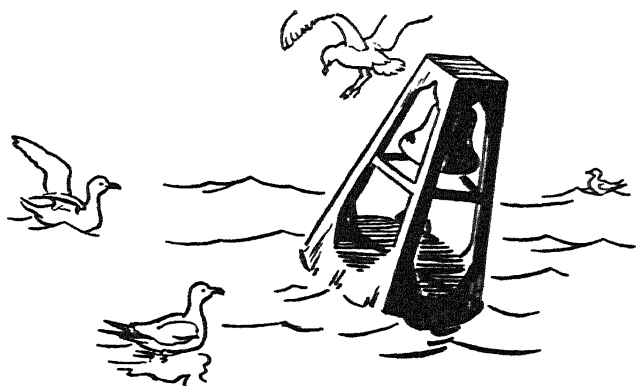
At the southeast end of the island, sometimes called Ships' Graveyard, is one of the island's most beautiful views, faintly reminiscent of Gay Head on Martha's Vineyard—but a Gay Head only in physical contour, lacking entirely the brilliant hues and colors. Known also as Mohegan Bluffs, it was here that in 1590 "a war party of Mohegan Indians was driven over these bluffs by Block Island Indians." Not far away stands Southeast Light, ris-

## *Islands of New England*

ing over two hundred feet above the water, its light visible for many miles.

The township of Block Island is known as New Shoreham, and the affairs of the town are conducted by a town council. Around Old Harbor is the village of the island, its buildings rather threadbare but in summer its main street teeming with activity. Plenty of summer hotels stand ready to take care of the visitors, and the island has one Catholic and three Protestant churches. Most visitors who come to Block Island for a period of more than a few days bring their cars across from the mainland, for one of the pleasant things to do on the island is to drive along its crooked roads, with walls on either side hidden partially by wild honeysuckle. Three or four miles of beautiful sand beach, as solid as a hardwood floor, are another island attraction. The person intrigued by an island, but with little time to spend, can make the round trip from Point Judith in a day and still have several hours to spend on the island. Several taxi drivers meet the boat, drivers well primed with all the local lore and eager to impart it.

The season is short on Block Island, and right after Labor Day the streets begin to look deserted. But some vacationers like this time of year the best of all, for September and October days are beautiful on Block Island.



### X X I I I

## The Elizabeth Islands

ASK MANY PEOPLE the location of the Elizabeth Islands and they won't be able to tell you. Yet these long, sprawling bits of land off the coast of Massachusetts and bordering Buzzard's Bay were the scene of the first English colonization in New England. In 1602 Bartholomew Gosnold, with thirty-two comrades, landed from his small boat, the *Concord*, at Cuttyhunk Island, the outermost island of the Elizabeth group. Here, at the west end of the island, he found a fresh-water pond with "a rocky islet, containing near an acre of ground full of wood on which we began our fort and place of abode."

An early account states that while Gosnold was on the island he was visited by Indians who came from the mainland in nine canoes. Except for loincloths, beads, and feathers, they were entirely naked and were smoking tobacco in clay and copper pipes. These Indians were friendly and co-operative and were willing to ex-

## *Islands of New England*

change furs of fox, beaver, wildcat, and deer for beads and brightly colored trinkets. They even had with them, in little leather bags, implements for making fire.

The Englishmen stayed on Cuttyhunk Island for several weeks, exploring the surrounding islands and the mainland and discovering great supplies of sassafras, which at that time was highly esteemed in England as medicine. In the middle of the summer, with a boatload of sassafras, they sailed for home.

At this point it might be pertinent to mention that "doubting Thomases" from nearby Martha's Vineyard contend that Gosnold settled, not on Cuttyhunk, but on No Mans Land, lying three miles southwest of Gay Head on Martha's Vineyard.

The Elizabeth group comprises a dozen or so islands, varying in size from a few acres to several thousand acres, and bearing such names as Nonamesset, Uncatena, Monohansett, Naushon, Weepecket, Pasque, Nashawena, Penikese, Gull, and Cuttyhunk. For over three hundred years they have been a part of the political life of Martha's Vineyard.

Of this group, the principal ones are Naushon, which is the largest and nearest the mainland, Pasque, Nashawena, Penikese, and Cuttyhunk. The first three islands are privately owned by the Forbes family of Boston. Penikese was formerly used as a leper colony, but at the present time is government-owned and maintained as a sanctuary for birds. In 1873 Professor Louis Agassiz had the idea of establishing a summer school for the study of



## *The Elizabeth Islands*

comparative zoology and Mr. John Anderson of New York, who then owned Penikese, offered the use of the island and a fund of \$50,000 as an endowment for the school. This offer was accepted and the school was built, being called the Anderson School of Natural History. For two summers, the school was in operation, but during the following year the buildings were burned and were never rebuilt.

Cuttyhunk is the only island with real community living and public means of transportation. From the middle of June to the middle of September you can leave New Bedford daily on the *Alert* for Cuttyhunk. During the remainder of the year, the boat makes only two round trips weekly.

Back in the days of the whaling vessels, New Bedford was a busy harbor, and even today there is plenty of action around the docks as you board the *Alert* at Pier 3. People along this part of the coast are always ready to talk when you mention the hurricane of 1938. New Bedford Harbor was hard hit, as were the surrounding islands, including Cuttyhunk. "We'd just gotten in from Cuttyhunk and tied up for the night," the skipper said, "when along came a tremendous wave and set the *Alert* right up on the wharf. But we fared better than most of 'em 'round here, at that."

Palmer Island, which you pass leaving New Bedford Harbor, has always had a tragic and tempestuous history. Late in the 1600's, at the time of King Philip's War, this six-acre spot of land was used as a detention camp for bloodthirsty Indians. Records show that the first light-

## *Islands of New England*

house was built on the island in 1849, when New Bedford was the home port of scores of whaling vessels. At different times since, the southern side of the island has housed a hotel and dance hall, an amusement park, and various other enterprises. For nearly twenty years Arthur Small had been the keeper of Palmer Island Light, where he and his wife lived in the keeper's picturesque residence. Keeper Small and his wife were the only people on the island when the hurricane struck on September 21, 1938. Powerless in the face of waves fifty feet high, and with the wind blowing over one hundred miles an hour, both Small and his wife were swept to sea, Mrs. Small being killed by falling timbers. Badly injured, Small was later rescued, while the island was left a shambles.

Long before you get to Cuttyhunk from New Bedford you see the elongated outline of the Elizabeth Islands. At the left, Naushon is a faint blur against the horizon, then comes smaller Pasque, and, as the boat gets nearer, the bare slopes of Nashawena are seen, separated from Cuttyhunk only by a narrow passage, Canapitsit Channel. Standing out boldly against the sky at the top of low-lying Nashawena is a single residence, while below and nearer the shore is a set of substantial farm buildings where the island caretaker keeps stock and poultry. The owners of these three islands are said to pay over 50 per cent of the taxes of the town of Gosnold, the corporate name of the Elizabeth Island group.

Extending out from Cuttyhunk toward Nashawena a narrow sand bar makes one side of the harbor. During the '38 hurricane, the tremendous impact of the waves

## *The Elizabeth Islands*

caused a break-through. This has since been remedied by sinking several barges loaded with stones and sand, thus filling up the openings. "Waste of the taxpayers' money," they grumble. "'Twon't ever last."

Cuttyhunk is like no other island. Seen from the boat as you approach, it looks like an American primitive painting, a Grandma Moses canvas, perhaps. Rising rather steeply from the water's edge, the houses are placed here and there, with no apparent rhyme or reason of arrangement. Near the shore, a gleaming white building houses the Coast Guard crew, and even as you are looking, two lads climb the steep road to the tower at the summit of the island where a twenty-four-hour watch is maintained of the surrounding waters. One large building seems to dominate the scene, a residence built many years ago by William Wood of the American Woolen Company and occupied today by members of the Wood family, who own a big share of the island. Wood had planned to build a much larger residence overlooking the island but the only part of the project completed is the well-built stone walls on either side of the road leading to the proposed site.

The best way to explore Cuttyhunk is on foot. Over a mile of macadam road serves the main section of the island, and several dirt roads lead off this highway for short distances, but the footpaths that crisscross the country are much more inviting. You can climb the wall-bordered road leading to the Coast Guard lookout tower, then follow the sketchy footpath that meanders around the back part of the island. Not a tree to be seen, only gray rocks and the greens and browns and tans of the

## *Islands of New England*

low vegetation with, in summer, bright splashes of wild flowers. Stumbling along the crooked path, soon you look down on West End Pond and the monument to Bartholomew Gosnold, placed here on the tercentenary of Gosnold's discovery of the island. Unlike many Maine coastal islands, rimmed with enormous stone cliffs and looking much as they did back in the days of Champlain or any of the other early explorers, the contour of Cuttyhunk's coast has changed even in very recent years, as both the hurricanes of 1938 and 1944 were especially violent in this section. Gosnold and his crew might not even recognize the present Cuttyhunk! But standing on the high land of the island at sunset and looking across the waters of Vineyard Sound at the gaily colored cliffs of Gay Head on Martha's Vineyard, the view is as entrancing as it was over three hundred years ago when the first white men visited the island.

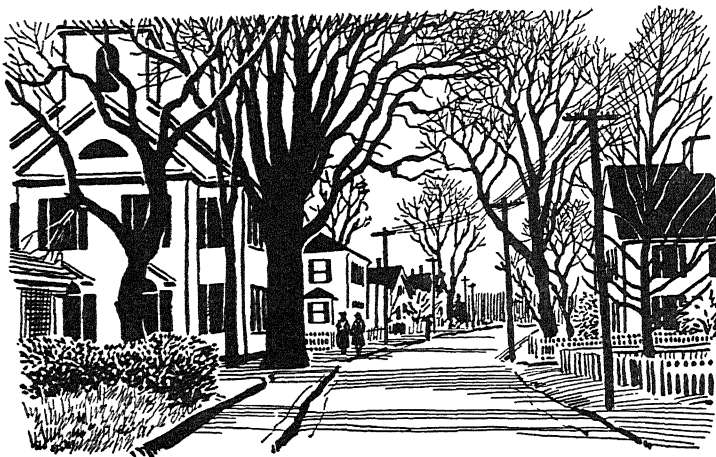
Cuttyhunk was called by the Algonquins Pooocutohhunkunoh, which means an open, cleared field, a field which has been cultivated, referring perhaps to Gosnold's brief occupancy of the island.

Cuttyhunk lies about fifteen miles offshore from New Bedford and is a small island, less than three miles long and one and a half miles wide. In winter the population dwindles to a dozen or fifteen families, not over fifty people. But, isolated as the island is, it has most modern conveniences—its own electric plant, water and sewage systems, and telephone connections. A church, school, and a library are also maintained by the islanders. In the summer the population takes a big jump, to four or five hundred during the busy season.

## *The Elizabeth Islands*

In 1654 Naushon was purchased from the Indians by the Reverend Thomas Mayhew, Jr., the young Vineyard missionary. Eventually the island passed into the possession of Major General Wait Still Winthrop, who used it as a country gentleman's estate, settling tenants on the land and stocking it with game and birds. After the Winthrops came the Bowdoin, who were the "Masters of Naushon" for one hundred twenty-five years. After considerable litigation, the island finally was sold to the Forbes family, who have owned the island for over one hundred years. The present head of the family is W. Cameron Forbes, former United States ambassador to Japan. The affairs of the island are handled by five trustees, who allow no motor vehicles, with the exception of a few farm machines. Consequently members of the fifteen Forbes households travel on horseback or in elegant carriages and buggies. A recent visitor to the island, who enjoyed the fishing in Mary's Lake, was Crown Prince Akihito of Japan.

One of the most intriguing denizens of the island, however, is the ghost of Governor James Bowdoin, Revolutionary War hero, who is reported to wander at night in one of the rooms of the Forbes mansion, where he died.



X X I V

## Martha's Vineyard

ISLANDERS call it "the Vineyard" and no one really knows just who Martha was. An old story used to be told of the man who had three daughters—Martha, Nancy, and Naomi—hence the names of the islands: Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, and No Mans Land. A more plausible story is that the original name of the island was Martin's Vineyard, from Martin Pring who visited it about 1603. Later this name was changed to Martha's Vineyard. Still another explanation gives the credit to Gosnold, who arrived at the island late in May 1602 in quest of sassafras. He first bestowed the name Martha's Vineyard upon the barren island lying three miles off Gay Head, known today as No Mans Land. Later on this name was taken over by the larger island.

The earliest permanent settler on the island was the Rev-

## *Martha's Vineyard*

erend Thomas Mayhew, Jr., who, with a party of Englishmen, arrived in 1642, at what is now Edgartown. In 1646 the elder Mayhew came to join them and to carry on the work of building up the colony. His fairness and justice with the Indians is one of the bright spots in the often sordid history of the dealings of the two races in this country. Not only a business leader but a missionary, Mayhew converted the red men to Christianity and soon had appointed certain of the men as deacons to carry on his teachings among the other members of the tribe. Probably not a little of Mayhew's influence stemmed from the fact that he made a study of their language and was able to teach them to write Indian words in English characters. Hymnals were printed in the Indian language, and deeds were written and recorded in both languages. It was the integrity and honesty of Mayhew more than anything else that drew to this remote colony such a high type of early settlers.

Lying only a few miles offshore from the town of Falmouth, Massachusetts, and forming the outer barrier of Vineyard Sound, Martha's Vineyard is a good-sized island, having an area of approximately one hundred square miles. You can reach the island by steamer from New Bedford and land at Oak Bluffs, or you can run your car onto the ferry at Woods Hole, and in a matter of forty-five minutes drive off the dock at Vineyard Haven. Many miles of improved highways crisscross the island, not to mention the beach and woodland roads which add so much to the island's charm. And, like Nantucket, the Vineyard has a fine airport.

To place oneself right in the middle of island living and

## *Islands of New England*

become oriented, it's a good plan to buy the current issue of the island newspaper, *Vineyard Gazette*, one of the best—in fact, considered by many the best—of the country's weekly newspapers. Back in 1920 Henry Beetle Hough and his wife, Elizabeth Bowie Hough, came to the island and took over a newspaper that had seen better days. Mr. Hough has told the story of their adventures in this undertaking in his *Country Editor* and *Once More the Thunderer*. Today the newspaper is housed in one of Edgartown's lovely old residences.

In the front-page masthead is a sketch: in the center, a bunch of grapes—"the Vineyard"; on the left whaling vessels and the sea; on the right the man at the plow and the land. On either side of the sketch are these descriptive captions:

Island of Martha's Vineyard, seven miles off the southeast coast of Massachusetts. Winter population, 6,000; in summer, 40,009. Twenty miles from city of New Bedford, eighty miles from Boston, and one hundred fifty miles from New York.

Devoted to the interests of the six towns on the island of Martha's Vineyard, viz: Edgartown, Oak Bluffs, Tisbury (Vineyard Haven), West Tisbury, Chilmark, Gay Head. These, with Gosnold, constitute Dukes County.

The harbor of Vineyard Haven, called in the old days Holmes Hole, lies between two promontories, West Chop and East Chop, with a picturesque lighthouse perched on each. The village, a bustling place in the summer, is a good center from which to explore the island.



## *Martha's Vineyard*

Oak Bluffs, about three miles from Vineyard Haven, got its start as a camp-meeting ground. Back in 1835 the Camp Meeting Association leased land in what was then Edgartown township, where they pitched tents and invited people to come for a vacation combined with religious services held in a huge tent. It is believed by some Vineyarders that here began New England's summer resort business.

Eventually the association purchased land and laid it out in campsites. As prosperity came to the camp ground, the gospel tent was replaced by a steel tabernacle, and wooden cottages took the place of canvas tents. Thus was born Oak Bluffs, known in the early days as Cottage City.

Three or four miles east of Oak Bluffs lies the "jewel" of the island, Edgartown. Like Nantucket, the Vineyard's wealth stemmed from the days of whaling, and the narrow streets of Edgartown are lined with gleaming white houses set close together, many with widow's walks where anxious wives once watched the lone harbor for homebound sails. Today the whaling days are over and few and far between are the old folks who remember tales of that era of adventure. Captain George Zeb (Zebulon) Tilton who, as boy and man, followed the sea for well onto eighty years could tell many yarns about his brother, Captain George Fred Tilton, one of the last of the whalers. One of the most incredible stories is of the time George Fred's ship was caught in the Arctic ice pack. Disaster threatened the entire crew as the men faced starvation in the long Arctic winter. But George Fred was a resourceful islander and

## *Islands of New England*

didn't aim to take it lying down. So he started on foot and walked from Nome to Seattle, across part of the Arctic Ocean and a big section of Alaska, to get help for the stranded men.

Just off Edgartown, across Katoma Bay, lies Chappaquiddick Island, occasionally joined to Martha's Vineyard by a sand bar, but more often a separate island reached by ferry from Edgartown. The more hardy type of summer visitors live on this island, though only a handful are there year round. It's a delightful wild country to explore. On the northeastern point, across from the Vineyard, stands the white tower of Cape Poge Light, one of the bleakest and most dangerous locations along this section of the coast.

The shore of the island, bordering the open ocean and extending to Gay Head, has long been known as South Beach, a tremendous stretch of beach which changes in shape and extent as the Atlantic breaks against it. No place in the East has anything to compare with the cliffs at Gay Head. It's like a bit of Arizona transplanted to this offshore island. If Gay Head were the sole attraction which the Vineyard had to offer, there would still have been sight-seers to the island. Back when the roads were cart tracks and thirty pairs of bars had to be manipulated in driving from Edgartown to Gay Head, visitors made the long, tedious trip, sometimes taking two days for the journey. Today it's only a matter of a few minutes along an excellent road until you can leave your car and climb a winding path to the best vantage for viewing the cliffs.

## *Martha's Vineyard*

Like an exotic guardian of the island, the Gay Head cliffs loom up to a height of one hundred fifty feet or more, the colors of the clay ranging all the way from browns and greens through tan, pure white, and gray, and even to shades of rose and pink. Never do the cliffs look quite the same, for the colors vary with the time of day and the seasons.

In 1799 the government built a lighthouse on this great headland overlooking Vineyard Sound and the distant Elizabeth Islands. Faithfully tended for many years, the light enormously reduced the hazards of the terrible Devil's Bridge Ledge which runs off the shore from Gay Head. But almost seventy years ago, in January 1884, the steamer *City of Columbus* sailed from Boston on the first leg of its trip to Florida. Early in the morning the vessel struck the reef, and within twenty minutes she went down with one hundred persons aboard. This was one of the worst disasters in the history of the Vineyard. Several of the Gay Head light keepers have been Indians, for here at this end of the island is a small village occupied mainly by people of Indian descent.

Not far from Gay Head on Vineyard Sound is the picturesque fishing village of Menemsha where most of the natives get their livelihood from the sea or from the summer folks and the artists who love this spot.

The central part of the island is a Great Plain stretching from the hills of Chilmark (the town nearest Gay Head) and all the hills of the north shore to Edgartown at the other end. On the ocean side this plain is cut by a series of Great Ponds extending along the south side of

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the island and separated from the Atlantic only by the narrow South Beach. At times of freshets, when the water rises in the ponds, the walls often break through and great streams of fresh water flow to the sea. In springtime, schools of fish rush through these openings into the ponds to spawn, then the action of the sea at length closes the openings and holds the fish captive. So it goes on over the years.

Through this center of the island are delightful drives. The road from Edgartown to the "up-island" towns of West Tisbury and Chilmark is known as the Takemmy Trail and skirts the Martha's Vineyard State Forest, which covers an area of over four thousand acres. West Tisbury and Chilmark are popular places for vacationers who wish to get away from the noise and bustle of the busier towns. The year-round residents are mainly fishermen—fisherwomen, too, according to a recent news item, which states that young wives in hip boots and oilskins have upset the three-hundred-year masculine monopoly on scallop dragging in the tiny village of Chilmark. It goes on to say that the women made twenty dollars a day helping catch the greatest run of scallops in the history of the community. More than fifteen hundred dollars a day was split among less than eighty persons holding "citizen's permits" to catch scallops.

The women rose up in arms against the local "male only" restriction on scallop permits and won the right to share in the annual fall bonanza. At a special town meeting they mustered thirty-four votes to thirty to request the selectmen to let down the bars. Until nearby Gay Head permitted women to go scalloping in 1949, the villagers

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had never made any specific rules against women. It was unthinkable to them that women would forsake their traditional place in the home for the rough and cold work of scallop dragging on salty Menemsha Pond. The issue came to a head because several young wives with husbands in the service or working at jobs on the mainland saw no reason why they should not share in the rich harvest.

By throwing open the scallop fishing to women, Chilmark almost doubled its catch, because the law, by local option, is set at four bushels a day for each legal resident.

The variety of the scenery on the island and the fact that it retains much of its unspoiled charm has always attracted a high type of vacationers. In Edgartown, in a beautiful old house, lives Mrs. Emily Post. James Cagney has a farm at Chilmark and a town house on the island, and spends here much of his time between picture assignments. Katharine Cornell and her husband, Guthrie McClintic, spend several months each year at their home, Chip Chop, reached by a narrow country road which borders Lambert Cove, a few miles from Vineyard Haven.

Many people seem to think that the best time to see the island is in the fall, after the summer folks have left. Then, in September and October—sometimes even as late as November—come days of enchantment and crystal-clarity when the sky and the water seem incredibly blue and the countryside is a riot of muted colors. The evenings and nights are cool, but the midday sun makes the days warm and comfortable. In the early fall, the golden-rod and the purple of the asters shine across the plains and the pastures. As the season advances, come the color-

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ing of the red maples, and the russets and greens and browns with patches of startling crimson where huckleberry bushes are clumped in gorgeous masses. The sumac and black alder add their note of color, while the salt marsh samphire blazes with redness. Now is the time for leisurely drives along the almost deserted roads, or walks through the woodlands or along the empty beaches. Many of Edgartown's houses are closed at this season, but fall flowers still bloom in the gardens and there is time for visiting and neighborliness among the all-year residents. In October comes the Vineyard's Striped Bass Derby, and off the rocky cliffs and boulder-piled beaches of Squibnocket or the brown sandy shores of Lobsterville male and female enthusiasts contend for honors. Fishing, bathing, golf, tennis, and yachting—there is sport for every taste on the island.



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## Nantucket

SOMETIMES called "the far-away island" and "the little gray lady," Nantucket is probably the most written-about island along the entire Atlantic coast. In the days of sailing packets, it must have seemed far away, and even to-day, with frequent airplane service and with daily boats shuttling back and forth to the mainland, the island can still seem "far away" if bad weather grounds the plane or a heavy sea ties the boat up at the docks.

Lying twenty miles south of Cape Cod and thirty miles from the mouth of Buzzards Bay, this spot of land measures fourteen miles in length, with a width of over three miles at its widest. Situated as it is, not too far distant from the warm waters of the Gulf Stream, its winters are milder and its summers cooler than the mainland off which it lies. A map of the New England coastline shows Nan-

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tucket shaped like a pork chop, with a sand bar extending to the north while a second bar forms the western boundary of the Great Harbor. On the eastern side of this harbor is a narrow strip of sand called the Haulover. Here the fishermen drag their dories across to the harbor, thereby avoiding the long trip around Great Point. These sand bars are vulnerable to wind and waves and the contour of the coastline is continually changing. The Haulover has sometimes been an open channel from the sea to the harbor, at other times a bar of sand.

To get an idea of the irregular shape of the island and the miles of rolling country, treeless but covered with low bushes and shrubs, you should approach it by air. In the early days the unfenced land lying between the little villages and the farms was known as "the commons," as it was used in common for all the islanders; now it is referred to as "the moors." Rough, rutty roads, leading off from the main highways running from one end of the island to the other and from one side to the other, criss-cross this area. Along the highways and in many other sections of the island are beautiful stands of trees, but it was not always thus, as most of these trees were set out by man and were not native to the island. Herman Melville, in his *Moby Dick*, realized this and wrote:

Nantucket! Take out your map and look at it. See what a real corner of the world it occupies; how it stands there, away off shore, more lonely than the Eddystone lighthouse. Look at it—a mere hillock, and elbow of sand; all beach, without a background. There is more sand there than you would use in twenty years as a substitute for blotting paper. Some gamesome wights will tell you that they have



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to plant weeds there, they don't grow naturally; that they import Canada thistles; that they have to send beyond seas for a spile to stop a leak in an oil cask; that pieces of wood in Nantucket are carried about like bits of the true cross in Rome; that people there plant toadstools before their houses, to get under the shade in summer time; that one blade of grass makes an oasis, three blades in a day's walk a prairie; that they wear quicksand shoes, something like Laplander snowshoes; that they are so shut up, belted about, every way inclosed, surrounded, and made an utter island of by the ocean, that to their very chairs and tables small clams will sometimes be found adhering, as to the backs of sea turtles.

Of course the quickest way to reach Nantucket is by air and, on a bright sunny day, the trip ends all too soon. But for people who like the water and wish to travel the lovely Nantucket roads in their own cars, a steamer service carrying passengers and automobiles connects the island with the mainland ports of New Bedford and Woods Hole. Some people believe that the best time to see Nantucket is in the off season, when the streets are no longer cluttered with summer folks and there is plenty of room to get around. In late September or October, perhaps, when the days have not quite lost the warmth of summer and the gardens are still gay with old-fashioned blooms. The close-up of Nantucket as the boat swings around Brant Point and heads into the harbor shows the town snuggled down cozily around the waterfront, with here and there a church steeple pointing to the skies. Everywhere through the town are shingled houses, weathered to a soft silvery gray. No wonder that her sons spoke of her with affection as "the little gray lady by the sea."

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Much has been written concerning Nantucket's early days. One of the most interesting accounts is that of Obed Macy, who lived over one hundred years ago, and whose ancestor, Thomas Macy, with his wife and five children and another man and boy, came to the island from Salisbury on the mainland in the fall of 1659. Before this settlement, however, a preliminary survey of the island had been made by a group of men under the leadership of Tristram Coffin, and early in July of 1659 a deed was drawn up between Thomas Mayhew, who had bought the island in 1641 from Lord Sterling, and nine purchasers. The price paid to Mayhew for the entire island was "thirty pounds in good Marchantable Pay in ye Massachusetts under which government they now inhabit—and two Beaver Hatts one for myself and one for my wife. . . ." The following year ten families settled on the island.

The two factors which influenced most deeply the pattern of Nantucket's early days were the birth of the whaling industry and the coming of the Quakers, whose beliefs dominated the island for nearly two hundred years.

The economic history of Nantucket has followed the rhythm of the tides as the waters ebb and flow against its shores. Boom years have been followed by years of penury and poverty. The early prosperity of the island rested firmly on whaling, and for three quarters of a century or more this little island virtually controlled the whaling industry. Nantucket boys were more familiar with remote Pacific isles than they were with the Massachusetts towns on the adjoining mainland. It was during this lush period that the harbor was filled with tall-masted ships. Big burly harpooners and seamen elbowed

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each other along the narrow streets, and money, in the form of sperm oil, poured into the coffers of the town. With prosperity came building, and it was during these years that many of the beautiful houses were built that line Nantucket's streets today. Silver knockers and silver name plates adorned the front doors, and eagles spread their wings above ancient fanlights.

In Nantucket town there are four hundred houses, set closely together. Many are mansions of dignity and elegance; some are simple gray cottages, plain like the Quakers who built them. Unlike many New England towns, few architectural monstrosities mar Nantucket's beauty. Here the era of mansard roofs, towers, and other excrescences is practically unknown, for when Nantucket's boom collapsed, it traveled fast and far and soon such lean years followed that there was no money for building or even for repairs.

After the peak year of 1842, a series of misfortunes fell upon Nantucket. A disastrous fire in 1846 gutted the entire business area. The California gold rush was on and scores of men sailed from Nantucket in quest of riches. Then came the greatest blow of all—coal oil was discovered in Pennsylvania, ending the day of sperm oil. Just about then, the Civil War further disrupted the island economy and years of poverty followed years of boom. The men couldn't earn a living, and many families left the island. Houses of beauty and dignity were boarded up and soon fell into disrepair. From a high of around ten thousand population, the number dwindled to close to three thousand.

But soon a trend that was felt all over the nation be-

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gan to be reflected in Nantucket. A little more money was circulating and cities were expanding. Families who had the wherewithal wanted to get away from the heat, the noise and confusion and were looking around for desirable places in which to spend the summer. It was then, in the '70's, that Nantucket first began to come into its own as a vacation resort. People "from away" discovered its delightful summer climate. Beautiful old houses, terribly rundown of course, could be bought for a song and restored. Fortunately these early summer folks were people of good taste who retained the simplicity of the smaller houses and the elegance of the mansions, and added none of the gingerbread folderols of the Victorian era. That is why today this little island town has the charm and dignity of a century ago, when life was more simple and more leisurely in tempo.

A short walk around the center of the town will take you to many of Nantucket town's attractions. Near the Steamboat Wharf is the Whaling Museum, a square, dignified building of faded brick. Once this was a busy factory for making sperm-oil candles. Today it houses precious whaling relics—huge clumsy kettles, deadly harpoons, and other whaling gear, and beautiful examples of scrimshaw, articles carved from whale teeth by men whiling away lonely hours on long voyages away from home. There are maps and charts and pictures of famous whaling vessels, and ships' logs in which you can read records of four- and five-year voyages, and thrilling rescues, and the disasters that befell Nantucket men.

You can wander along South Water Street and look out

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across the harbor, then back along Candle Street to the Square. Here at the foot of elm-shaded Main Street is another beautiful brick building, the home of the famous Pacific Club, founded by twenty-four retired sea captains who had sailed around the Horn. Here they met around a big iron stove and swapped yarns of the days when they sailed their vessels to the China Sea and to every far part of the globe. The building was built as a warehouse for William Rotch, a wealthy Quaker shipowner. This was the home office for the ships *Dartmouth*, *Beaver*, and *Eleanor* which, in 1775, carried a cargo of whale oil to London and on their return were loaded with tea. It was this tea that was thrown overboard from the decks of these ships in the Boston Tea Party.

Upper Main Street seems to have been Nantucket's Park Avenue even a century ago, for here are many of the island's most beautiful residences. Here are the Coffin houses and the Macy house, and three identical houses built by Joseph Starbuck, a wealthy shipowner, for his sons, George, Matthew, and William. All were exactly alike and were known as "West Brick," "Middle Brick," and "East Brick." No more perfect examples of colonial Georgian architecture can be found in the entire country. Across the street are the pillared mansions built by William Hadwen and Nathaniel Barney, partners in the sperm-oil candle factory, who had married two of the Starbuck daughters. On the top of many of Nantucket's old houses is a walk, or railed platform, built on the ridgepole. When a ship was due, the owner who lived in the mansion would climb the attic stairs and clamber out through a trap door in the roof to scan the horizon. Here, too, the wives and children

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of the men long overdue from long voyages would spend hours anxiously watching for the return of their loved ones. In Maine these platforms were called captain's walks and sometimes widow's walks, but in Nantucket they were known simply as walks.

You can spend hours—and days—exploring Nantucket's narrow, crooked streets. On Orange Street stands the Unitarian church with its famous Lisbon bell, which is sounded at seven in the morning, at noon, and at curfew time. This bell was bought by a Nantucket captain and was rung for the first time in 1815. On the opposite side of town is the North Church, with its gleaming white cupola plainly visible from the incoming steamer as it swings around Brant Point and enters the harbor.

Out Center Street toward Sunset Hill, on a little lane back of West Chester Street, stands the oldest house on the island, the Jethro Coffin House, built in 1686 as a wedding gift for Jethro Coffin and Mary Gardner by their fathers. This house has an enormous central chimney with an inverted horseshoe in raised bricks, and tiny, diamond-paned windows. On the outskirts of the town, on a hill overlooking the town and harbor, is the Old Mill, built in 1746 of hewn oak beams, many taken from wrecks of ships and pegged together with hickory pins. Tradition has it that, during the Revolution, the vanes of the mill were set at a certain angle to warn ships in the harbor that British vessels were approaching. But, best of all, this mill isn't just a museum piece but is in working condition and is still in business grinding corn.

On Vestal Street is the Maria Mitchell birthplace with its adjoining observatory and scientific library. Miss

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Mitchell seems to have been a very bright girl for the times, and, as a diversion, took up the study of the stars. One clear autumn night in 1847, when the young lady was twenty-nine years old, she was at her favorite pastime of star-gazing when, sweeping the skies with her telescope, she spied a new comet. Excitedly she called her father, who, after a few minutes at the telescope, confirmed her discovery. It really wasn't a very important comet, but about a year afterward Maria Mitchell, the clever young American girl, had a medal bestowed upon her by King Frederick of Denmark, and was made a Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 1861, when Vassar College was opened, Miss Mitchell became its first Professor of Astronomy.

A simple tablet and fountain on the road to Maddaket mark the birthplace of another island woman, Abiah Folger Franklin, whose most illustrious son was Benjamin Franklin.

To visit Nantucket Island without seeing Siasconset would be like taking a first trip to New York City without touring Radio City. Back in the early days, Siasconset, or 'Sconset, as it is locally called, was simply a cluster of fishermen's shacks, about eight miles from the center of Nantucket town. Fishermen came here in the spring and summer for the dory fishing. As the years went by and vacationers visited the island in greater numbers, they too discovered the charm of this remote spot and started building summer cottages. Early in the present century famous Broadway theatrical folk came in such numbers that 'Sconset became the largest and most popular actors' colony in

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America. Edna Wallace Hopper and Lillian Russell, Harry Woodruff and George Fawcett, Marie Dressler and De Wolf Hopper—names quite as shining in their day as our present flock of movie stars. They all rode their bicycles and made their merry way along the narrow streets of 'Sconset.

'Sconset lies on a bluff, twenty-five feet above one of Nantucket's fine surf beaches. To the extreme left is Sankaty Lighthouse, from which there is a magnificent view. Siasconset's principal street is Broadway, with near at hand the little town square with the famous village pump. The water from this well was used by the villagers for a hundred years or more.











